CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Tuesday, 23 January 1996, at 10 a.m.

President: U Aye (Myanmar)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 721st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament and the first part of the 1996 session.

At the outset, I should like to extend a warm welcome to the newly appointed Permanent Representatives of Cuba, Ambassador Caballero Rodríguez; of Kenya, Ambassador Tolle; and of Nigeria, Ambassador Abuah; and assure them of our full support and cooperation in their new assignments. I should also like to take this opportunity to welcome, once again, Mr. John Holum, Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, who will be addressing the Conference this morning. I am sure as in the past, his statement will be followed with great interest.

It is a great honour and a privilege for me to assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at an important juncture during the beginning of its 1996 session. My task has been made easier, thanks to the efforts of my predecessors, in particular Ambassador Benjelloun of Morocco.

1995 was a landmark year in the field of arms limitation and disarmament. It marked significant events and anniversaries, i.e. the fiftieth year of the use of nuclear weapons and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the NPT. It also witnessed the following important developments relating to arms limitation and disarmament: the indefinite extension of the NPT and the adoption by the NPT Conference of principles and objectives on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament measures; the signing of the Southeast Asia nuclear-weapon-free zone Treaty by the heads of State or Government of the seven ASEAN member States as well as Cambodia, Laos and my own country, Myanmar, at Bangkok on 15 December 1995; the finalization and completion of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty); and the adoption by the historic fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly of some important resolutions, which include resolution, 50/65 "Comprehensive nuclear-test-ban-treaty", and resolution 50/70 P, "Nuclear disarmament".

Geographical limitation of the spread of nuclear weapons in the form of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones constitutes an effective means of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The current trend toward the creation of increasing numbers of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world is most encouraging. The signing of the Southeast Asia nuclear-weapon-free zone Treaty by the heads of State or Government of seven ASEAN member States, together with Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar at Bangkok on 15 December 1995 can accordingly be deemed to be yet another significant and welcome development in this direction.

Emergence of a NWFZ in South-East Asia upon entry into force of the Treaty will constitute a crucial building block in the creation of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in our region of Asia. Such a development will undoubtedly contribute to peace and security of the region and to the strengthening of international security. As a South-East Asian nation and a signatory of the Treaty, Myanmar will exert all necessary efforts and join with our South-East Asian neighbours in our endeavour to achieve this common aspiration.

(The President)

1996 is a year of vast opportunities and challenges in the field of arms limitation and disarmament. The window of opportunity is open for the completion of the final text of the CTBT at an early date in 1996, in keeping with the objective set out in resolution 50/65 of the fiftieth United Nations General Assembly. However, due to the rapidly evolving international situation, this window of opportunity will remain open for us only for a limited time, and then pass us by. I need hardly mention that it remains essential for the CD to take timely and fruitful advantage of this opportunity offered to us.

Accordingly, it is imperative that the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban be re-established at this very first plenary meeting today, and the Committee commence its work immediately. It is incumbent upon all of us to collectively endeavour to resolve the outstanding issues in a spirit of flexibility and accommodation in order that we may produce a clean final text of the draft treaty during the first half of the year. The entire international community is looking to the CD to finalize the work of the CTBT in good time this year, and we must not fail in this crucial responsibility.

One of the most important resolutions adopted by the historic fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly was resolution 50/70 P on "Nuclear disarmament". This resolution is to date the most substantive resolution dealing with nuclear disarmament ever adopted by the General Assembly, by a majority of 106 votes in favour to 39 against with 17 abstentions. Myanmar, together with 32 other co-sponsors, took an active part in drafting the resolution and in seeing it through to its adoption by the General Assembly.

The resolution, inter alia, urges the nuclear-weapon States to stop immediately the qualitative improvement, development, stockpiling and production of nuclear warheads and their delivery vehicles; calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to undertake a step-be-step reduction of the nuclear threat and a phased programme of progressive and balanced deep reductions of nuclear weapons, and to carry out effective nuclear disarmament measures with a view to the total elimination of these weapons within a time-bound framework; and also calls upon the Conference on Disarmament to establish, on a priority basis, an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament to commence negotiations early in 1996 on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament and for the eventual elimination of these weapons within a time-bound framework.

Bearing in mind the terms of this milestone resolution, we should intensify our efforts in the CD with a view to developing a basis for consensus on this issue.

The CD established the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prohibition of the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons or other Nuclear Explosive Devices on 23 March last year. However, the Ad Hoc Committee has not been able to function during the 1995 session. In view of the importance of the subject, we should not fail to redouble our efforts and achieve substantive progress on this issue.

(The President)

Security assurances for non-nuclear weapon States is a long-standing question that merits high priority on our disarmament agenda. The 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, in its decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, recognized that further steps needed to be taken that could take the form of a legally binding instrument. It is imperative that we intensify our efforts to make progress on this high-priority issue.

Outer space must ideally be an environment for peaceful activities and be free of any measures toward its armament. Prevention of an arms race in outer space should rightly be kept on the active agenda of the CD.

An urgent question that demands the attention of the CD in a most expeditious and effective manner is that of expansion of its membership. The current composition of the CD no longer reflects the realities of the present-day world. Requests for CD membership by members of the G.23 and others deserve our serious attention and our determined efforts to resolve this impasse. The decision of the CD contained in document CD/1356 must necessarily be implemented at the earliest possible date, and further steps taken to review its membership periodically as required by the rules of procedure. As the President of the CD, I strongly deem it to be my responsibility to intensify consultations with a view to resolving this question.

This is indeed a critical moment for the CD, and time is opportune to inquire what the CD should be engaged in after the anticipated completion of the CTBT negotiations. And in this exercise, even the CD agenda itself is due for a thorough review, in view of the growing importance assumed by questions such as nuclear disarmament, as earlier mentioned. Transparency in armaments is a relatively new issue, and we need to take a more careful look at it, to identify a suitable subject in this regard for consideration in the CD. Prevention of nuclear war in the present-day context seems to have become too vague and general. Non-use of nuclear weapons may be a more precise identification of the issue suitable for negotiations in the CD. These are but a few thoughts on the future agenda of the CD. Hence the necessity for us to appoint a special coordinator with the responsibility to hold consultations on the review of the agenda of the CD.

In the post-cold-war era, the CD continues to be entrusted with a distinct and constructive role as the sole multilateral negotiating body dealing with disarmament. Past experience has demonstrated that the CD has been able to rise up and be responsive to the challenging demands of changed circumstances. It is our earnest hope that the CD will continue to provide the necessary answers to arms limitation and disarmament questions of the present and the future.

I know that I can count on your full support and cooperation in the discharge of my responsibilities, as well as on the hard work and dedication of the secretariat team under the leadership of Secretary-General Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky.

(The President)

The intensive consultations we have held on the organization of the 1996 session of the Conference have led me to believe that we will be able to undertake substantive work immediately. Once we have heard the speakers inscribed on the list in the plenary today, I shall invite the Conference to examine rapidly, in an informal meeting, the draft agenda for the 1996 session and the draft decision on the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. I shall also inform you of the remarks I intend to make on how to deal with the other issues on the agenda of the Conference. At the same informal meeting, I intend to take up the requests for participation by non-member States of the Conference in our work during this session, which the secretariat has distributed at the beginning of this meeting. Immediately afterwards, I shall resume the plenary meeting to formalize agreements reached in the informal meeting.

I should now like to call on Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to read to us a message addressed to the Conference by Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, as well as to inform us on the resources allocated to the Conference for its current session. Mr. Petrovsky, you have the floor, Sir.

Mr. PETROVSKY (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations): It is indeed a great privilege for me to read the following message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to the Conference on Disarmament. I quote:

"It gives me great pleasure to greet the opening of your annual session. 1996 will be a significant year in our effort to make the world a safer place.

"1995 brought the historic decision by the international community to consolidate and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons takes us forward in our collective search for a world of shared peace and security. But there is still much room for further progress in the nuclear field.

"The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the availability of their basic components constitute a threat to international peace and security. This threat has not abated. In some ways, it is growing. A coordinated response by the international community is essential. This makes vital the early entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction have stepped up their quest for a regime for the verification of compliance with its obligations. This sense of urgency and determination is encouraging.

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"A Protocol on the prohibition of the use of laser weapons designed to cause permanent blindness has been successfully negotiated. Progress has been made in the field of land-mines as a whole. The Organization of African Unity has adopted a Treaty on the denuclearization of the African continent. The path paved at Tlatelolco and Rarotonga has been extended. Ongoing, intensive efforts are continuing in South-East Asia and the Middle East in this direction.

"This general strengthening of non-proliferation regimes is being furthered by measures undertaken by the United States, the Russian Federation and countries in Europe in elaborating new security arrangements to replace the bipolar cold war system. We have witnessed the reduction of strategic nuclear warheads resulting from the START process. The security dialogue within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) framework is continuing. A new approach to collective security based on dialogue and cooperation is emerging. It must be sustained and enhanced and become truly universal.

"The Conference on Disarmament is the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum in this multifaceted effort. New opportunities bring you fresh responsibilities. Commitments have been undertaken at the NPT Review and Extension Conference. The fiftieth session of the General Assembly has adopted by consensus a resolution relevant in this regard. Our energies must now focus on the conclusion of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

"Important initiatives have recently been taken with respect to its scope. Considerable progress has been achieved in the negotiations during 1995. Given a further convergence of views, substantive progress can be made in other important areas such as verification and conditions for entry into force. Commitments have been made to conclude and sign the treaty this year. Nothing must be allowed to deter this objective.

"There are other important issues on the international disarmament agenda. These will merit your time and deliberation.

"In conformity with the decision you took last year, which was strengthened by the commitment undertaken at the NPT Review and Extension Conference, the international community has hopes for early successful negotiations on a non-discriminatory and verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The committee you have decided to establish will have an important negotiating mandate. Substantive work can begin on this important step toward non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

"In light of the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 984 and declarations by the nuclear-weapon States concerning both negative and positive security assurances, this issue also must be carefully

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considered. Transforming these unilateral declarations into a legally binding international instrument would help allay the many understandable concerns of non-nuclear-weapon States.

"The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms has proved the feasibility of the concept of transparency in armaments and offers a practical example of cooperation within the international community. Today, almost all types of weapons can be easily acquired. Illicit arms trade is a serious threat to national and international security and a factor that destabilizes States.

"Transparency in armaments is therefore even more urgent. It can open new avenues in addressing conventional arms control by enhancing trust and confidence among States. Your Conference has accumulated experience in this field. You must continue to address this issue and create the conditions conducive to arms reduction at the regional and global levels.

"This is an onerous responsibility. But given this Conference's record of determination, expertise and wisdom, the international community has every reason to look toward your endeavour with confidence and hope.

"As the heads of State and Government declared on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, 'The speed and extent of change in today's world point to a future of great complexity and challenge and to a sharp increase in the level of expectations of the United Nations'. This level will be particularly high in respect of bodies such as this, mandated to fulfil the most basic and critical purpose and principle of the United Nations: a world which will not know, or fear, the scourge of war.

"I wish you success."

While I have the floor, I should like to inform the Conference on the resources allocated to it this year.

As you know, the secretariat is mandated by the General Assembly to report to the Conference on the services to be assigned to it during the 1996 session. As in previous sessions, the Conference will be allocated 10 meetings per week with full services, and 15 meetings per week with full services during the sessions of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. In other words, we should be able to hold two daily meetings with full services throughout the whole of the 1996 session, plus one additional daily meeting when the seismic Group is in session.

I am sure you are all aware that the United Nations continues to face a serious financial crisis. In these circumstances, it is essential that the

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Conference makes the best possible use of the resources allocated to it. The Conference has, in the past, shown great flexibility in using the time allocated to it and I am sure that this will be the case this year, especially in view of the intensification of the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Permit me to remind you again, that punctuality in starting meetings is very important and that, as usual, meetings with full services cannot be held in the evenings or during weekends.

The situation with regard to documentation in the United Nations continues to be a source of serious concern, and the capacity of Conference Services to process documents in a timely manner is being constantly eroded. I wish to recall, again, that the measures accepted by the Conference at the informal meeting held on 22 April 1986 concerning savings in documentation continue to be valid. In order to implement these decisions, all documents need to be presented well in advance and duplication of documentation should be avoided. I am sure I can count on your cooperation in exercising every restraint, wherever possible, in the control of documentation.

I would also like to remind delegations to submit as soon as possible their letters of accreditation so that we may issue passes granting access to the Conference rooms, as well as the list of participants. Delegatees are kindly requested to carry with them either their CD passes or at least the identification provided by the United Nations Office at Geneva.

The Conference will continue to have at its disposal the Council Chamber, room I, room C-108, room III and the secretariat conference room on the sixth floor. When delegations need such facilities for their consultations, I would ask that they coordinate their requests through the secretariat.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for conveying the message from Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali and for the information he has provided on the resources allocated to the Conference. I would ask Mr. Petrovsky to be kind enough to convey to the Secretary-General of the United Nations our appreciation for his contribution and the importance he attaches to our work.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations has also sent me a communication transmitting all the resolutions on disarmament and international security matters adopted by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, including those addressing specific requests to the Conference. This communication has been distributed by the secretariat as document CD/1377.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Pakistan, the United States of America, Peru (who will speak on behalf of the Group of 21) and Romania. I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Akram.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): Please accept the warm felicitations of the Pakistan delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. We are most happy to see the representative of friendly Myanmar occupy the presidency of this Conference. Your skilful handling of the delicate consultations preceding this important session of the Conference has impressed us deeply. We are confident that under your able leadership, the Conference will lose no time in meeting a historic challenge, that of concluding a comprehensive test-ban treaty in 1996.

I would also like to express our appreciation and admiration to your predecessor, Ambassador Benjelloun-Touimi of Morocco, whose diplomatic skill, diligence and commitment inspired even the most reluctant among our membership to find common ground for progress on some of the most intractable issues confronted by the Conference. We hope that the expansion of the Conference will not be delayed any longer.

We are all aware that 1996 will be a critical turning-point in the endeavour to promote disarmament and to realize the quest for a nuclear-free world. The decision promoted last year by the nuclear Powers to extend the NPT indefinitely was the easy part of the crusade for non-proliferation. This year, we will face the moment of truth - when we shall need to decide whether we are prepared, collectively, to conquer the seductive lure of nuclear weapons and to construct a global security structure which does not rely on the unacceptable threat of the use of these weapons.

It is true that the danger of a global nuclear catastrophe has receded. The significant reductions in the arsenals of the two leading nuclear Powers under the START Treaties could open the way to a less dangerous nuclear balance. But it would be a fallacy to assume that the threat to peace posed by nuclear arms will disappear altogether. The fragile stability of "mutual assured destruction" has been replaced by the uncertainties of nuclear multipolarity. The uneasy equilibrium could be easily destroyed by precipitate action initiated by any one of the nuclear polarities. The only certain safeguard against the use of nuclear weapons is their complete elimination.

This moment in history, when there are no fundamental or strategic confrontations between the nuclear Powers, offers a unique window of opportunity to ban nuclear weapons and to reach agreement on a specific process for the phased reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.

It is, therefore, most disturbing that most of the nuclear-weapon States seem to be unprepared to consider the measures required to lead to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Some of them, while reducing their nuclear arsenals quantitatively, are upgrading them qualitatively. They cite unknown threats to justify retaining nuclear arms in operational readiness into the uncertain future. This posture reflects a political and strategic inertia which historians may consider as tragic for humankind. This embrace of nuclear weapons also denies the nuclear-weapon States the moral authority

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

to press for non-proliferation. Indeed, the possession of nuclear weapons by a select few States is the single most important factor impeding non-proliferation in certain regions of the world.

In the post-cold-war era, it is not exorbitant to expect the nuclear-weapon States to give a solemn and binding commitment not to use nuclear weapons. In the present circumstances, it should be possible to achieve a consensus to prohibit nuclear weapons and to agree on a programme for the progressive reduction and eventual elimination of these weapons.

Pakistan is strongly committed to the call of the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement from Cartagena for the commencement of negotiations, as a matter of the highest priority in 1996, for the phased reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific time-frame. This call has been endorsed overwhelmingly by the United Nations General Assembly.

It is unfortunate that the consensus which exists within this body, at the moment, is only to resume the negotiations for the comprehensive test-ban treaty. Pakistan has consistently advocated the objective of a CTBT for the past 30 years. We are glad that those who opposed this treaty in the past are now its strongest proponents. But the treaty we build in this body must not be such that it will transform those who supported the CTBT in the past into States which are hesitant to join it.

For over 30 years, the CTBT has been envisaged as a measure to halt the qualitative development of nuclear weapons and to foreclose the possibility of their horizontal proliferation. Indeed, at the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the international community resolved to achieve a "cessation of nuclear-weapon testing by all States within the framework of an effective nuclear disarmament process".

Pakistan, together with other members of the Group of 21 and other like-minded States, will continue to press for such an effective nuclear disarmament process in this body. We hope that you will continue consultations designed to evolve a consensus to open negotiations on this issue of highest priority.

The Pakistan delegation has made and will continue to make a substantive contribution to the conclusion of a CTBT as soon as possible in 1996. While the advanced textual stage represents considerable progress in the CTBT negotiations, several important issues remain to be resolved before the negotiations can be successfully concluded.

The most fundamental outstanding issue is the "scope" of the treaty. By definition, the CTBT must ban all nuclear explosions comprehensively. No exceptions can be allowed for any reason. Moreover, a basic aim of the CTBT is to prevent the further qualitative development of nuclear weapons. Thus, the treaty must prohibit all activities which are inconsistent with this objective. For this reason, it needs to be established that concepts such as zero-yield and no-yield tests are compatible with the CTBT's fundamental aims.

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

The CD has made considerable progress towards evolving an international monitoring system. It should not take too long to reach agreement on the architecture of the IMS, unless new problems arise. The endeavour, we feel, should be to achieve an effective verification regime. The conclusion of the CTBT should not founder on the shoals of an ambition to build a verification system which goes beyond the requirements of a CTBT.

In this context, we have serious reservations regarding some of the proposals relating to on-site inspections under the CTBT. OSI should be a rare occurrence in the CTBT verification regime. It should be a measure of last resort in resolving questions of compliance. The treaty must incorporate adequate safeguards against the abuse of OSIs. On-site inspections should be activated only by those events which are detected by the international monitoring system and not by so-called national technical means. Inspections must be first authorized by the Executive Council - in what is popularly called the "green light" procedure. And any OSIs that are authorized must be conducted in the least intrusive manner.

In the past few weeks, new doubts have arisen about the prospects of the CTBT and of a non-nuclear future for South Asia.

When the "Smiling Buddha" was exploded 20 years ago, Pakistan's response was to propose the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia - a concept repeatedly endorsed by the world community. Since then, nuclear-weapon-free zones have been created in Latin America, the South Pacific, Africa and perhaps soon in South-East Asia. In our region, unfortunately, there are, on the contrary, indications of preparations for another nuclear test. The son of Smiling Buddha could precipitate a nuclear arms race in South Asia. It will certainly subvert the possibility of concluding the CTBT in the near future. We look forward to categorical assurances that such a test is not being contemplated and will not be conducted.

I must add that my Government is equally concerned by recent statements that the serial production of nuclear-capable missiles has been commenced and that these missiles will soon be deployed across our border. This will create a hair-trigger security environment in a region where tensions already run high. It will oblige Pakistan to take appropriate measures to respond to the qualitatively more threatening security environment. We hope very much that everything will be done by the world community to prevent such a fateful step.

Speaking in Tokyo three days ago, Prime Minister Bhutto said: "Let Prime Minister Rao join me anywhere in the world to ensure that what happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki will never happen in Lahore and Delhi". She asked Prime Minister Rao to join her in saying "No" to a nuclear future.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Pakistan for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to Mr. John Holum, Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

Mr. HOLUM (United States of America): Mr. President, the United States congratulates you on assuming the Chair for these critical opening weeks. In your efforts and those of your colleagues, you will have the full cooperation of the United States delegation. Let me also thank those who oversaw the remarkable progress achieved last year in the test-ban negotiations: Ambassador Dembinski of Poland, Ambassador Norberg of Sweden, and Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands.

It is a great pleasure to return to the Conference on Disarmament, and again to convey a new message from the President of the United States. President Clinton's message reads as follows:

> "The hard work of the Conference on Disarmament has brought within reach a momentous achievement: a true-zero-yield comprehensive test-ban treaty that will endure for all time.
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> "The international community has stated its determination to sign the CTBT during this, the fiftieth anniversary year of the United Nations. Now it is your responsibility to realize the vision of Prime Minister Nehru, Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy, and many other world leaders over the past four decades.
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> "A comprehensive test-ban treaty is vital to constrain both the spread and further development of nuclear weapons. And it will help fulfil our mutual pledges to renounce the nuclear arms race and move toward our ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear arms.
>
> "The Conference on Disarmament has made remarkable progress. Indeed, your progress in just two years has made it possible to conclude the treaty in the next few months. Now, urgent national political decisions must complement your painstaking work in Geneva, so that the Conference can forward a completed comprehensive test-ban treaty to the United Nations General Assembly by June.
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> "I pledge the full and energetic support of the United States to conclude promptly a treaty so long sought and so long denied. Let us, now, take this historic step together."

President Clinton's message highlights the welcome reality that the decades-long quest to put an end to all nuclear explosions is nearing fruition. The reasons to complete and sign a comprehensive test ban this year - as endorsed last month in the United Nations General Assembly - are the same ones that have underpinned this quest from the beginning. The test ban is both a bulwark against the spread and further evolution of nuclear weapons capabilities, and a necessary step toward the larger goal of nuclear disarmament.

Nevertheless, I must acknowledge that the CTBT is at risk here in Geneva.

Last May in New York, nearly all the countries of the world decided to extend the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty indefinitely. All will

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remember the counsel of some that if the NPT were made permanent, then the nuclear-weapon States would lose interest in a comprehensive test ban. That was wrong. Lately, we have been hearing the argument that the test ban should not be negotiated because the NPT has been made permanent. That is just as wrong.

Today's threat to the test ban wears a benign face. It masquerades as even deeper devotion to arms control. The test ban, it has been suggested, should be linked to, if need be even sacrificed on the altar of, a time-bound framework for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

In response, I offer three propositions: First, a comprehensive test ban is itself a profoundly important new constraint, especially on the nuclear-weapon States. Second, the CTBT is an indispensable step if the ultimate elimination of nuclear arms is ever to be achieved. And third, holding one important goal hostage for another is a sure way to fail at both.

As to the first proposition, consider what the test ban represents in fact.

Remember that nearly all of the world's nations have separately committed themselves, in effect, not to test, as part of their broader commitment under the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, or NPT. So the test ban is, fundamentally, a limitation only on countries that have nuclear weapons or hold open the nuclear option - and most particularly, a limitation on the five nuclear-weapon States.

It is incomprehensible how countries with no interest in nuclear weapons, and every interest in a safer planet, could find that an unappealing bargain. For we have come to Geneva to say, "join us in limiting our nuclear-weapons programmes".

Consider the extent of that limitation. It is true that the CTBT is not a back-door way to ban nuclear weapons. Indeed, a test ban has become a realistic goal today in part because changes in the international security environment have dramatically lessened the role of nuclear weapons. And we believe the far fewer remaining weapons can be maintained safely and reliably without nuclear explosions.

But the safe maintenance of existing weapons designs is a far cry from the confident development of new ones. The latter requires nuclear explosive tests, which the CTBT would preclude.

And no one should believe that such a constraint is without meaning, that the destructive potential of the atom has already been fully plumbed and exploited. Even the open literature points to a broad array of new weapons developments which, with testing, could serve future military programmes even in States that have carried out great numbers of nuclear tests.

Many would involve nuclear directed-energy weapons - ways to focus the release of energy with greater precision than is now possible, to enable

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military effects well beyond those available now. Without nuclear testing the nuclear-weapon States will not be able to pursue confidently such technologies as the nuclear-explosion-pumped X-ray laser, the so-called nuclear shotgun, enhanced electromagnetic pulse weapons, microwave weapons, and enhanced-radiation weapons. This is a real constraint - as is well known by all those who recall past discussions in this very room of enhanced-radiation weapons. The true-zero test ban will also place out of reach new "mini-nuke" and "micro-nuke" concepts - technologies designed to use nuclear explosive yields in small amounts.

By fending off such developments, the CTBT will help make nuclear war less likely, and sustain today's trend toward smaller nuclear arsenals with shrinking roles in national defences.

Of course, any State's nuclear weapons development programme seeks to use nuclear materials more efficiently - to increase yields, trim weights, reduce volumes, manipulate shapes. This quest for efficiency and flexibility is the most basic reason why countries might test. It is also a most potent catalyst for arms races. To avert it is the test ban's core value, and a profound one.

So, let there be no mistake - the CTBT will help impede the spread of nuclear weapons. But its great practical impact will also be for arms control - to end development of advanced new weapons and keep new military applications from emerging.

This basic reality also lays to rest the claim that the CTBT will somehow help codify a discriminatory regime, dividing the world between nuclear "haves" and "have-nots". In truth it is and will remain possible to make simple nuclear weapons without nuclear explosive testing. So the CTB's fundamental effect is less to preclude the acquisition of nuclear weapons as such, which the NPT addresses, than to constrain the advancement of nuclear weapons capabilities by any country.

And it will do so by treating all countries the same. To call the test ban discriminatory is to blame it for things wholly outside its purview. More important, to defeat or derail the test ban on such grounds would be to prescribe, as an answer to discrimination, the remedy of more, rather than fewer, nuclear-weapon States. Who in this Conference wants to endorse such a perverse cure as that?

My second proposition relates to the commitment affirmed at the NPT Review and Extension Conference to the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. In an uncertain world, the path to that goal is not yet clearly marked. What is clear, however, is that the ultimate goal will be reached only through realistic moves forward, as genuine security concerns permit, with each step building on those before it. And it should be obvious to all that the CTBT is the next attainable major step on that path.

Consider, as well, that the CTBT's contribution to the process of nuclear disarmament goes well beyond its immediate impact on countries. It is a contribution described in detail in countless statements in this body, in the

(Mr. Holum, United States)

United Nations, and from podiums in capitals throughout the world. It is a contribution voted for with enthusiasm by States large and small, West and East and Non-Aligned, for well over a quarter of a century, in resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, even when the United States was not in a position to join in support of those resolutions. It is a contribution foreshadowed by the preamble to the 1963 Treaty of Moscow, the partial or limited test-ban Treaty, to which over 115 of the global community's States are party, including every nuclear-capable State not party to the non-proliferation Treaty. It is a contribution reflected in the preamble of the NPT itself, which now counts as parties more than 180 States. It is a contribution adopted without objection in the decision documents of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

That contribution is, above all, the embodiment of the international community's political commitment to make good on its pledges, to seize the moment when it is finally at hand - and not to erect, at a very late date, new demands and new obstacles to taking a concrete step that all States recognize for both its intrinsic and its symbolic importance. Because our political commitment to disarmament is so bound up with this decision, I believe the practical reality is this: we will never achieve a world free of nuclear weapons unless we first achieve a world free of nuclear explosions.

So let's get to it.

The same logic applies to my third proposition - that the strategy of linkage is a strategy of failure. To reach that conclusion it is necessary only to contemplate honestly how further arms control efforts will fare if the test ban should fail - if we all must drag ourselves home from Geneva with nothing to show but recriminations and debaters' points for the next global conference.

Linkage here would be especially self-defeating. For it effectively would pit against one another aims that should reinforce one another. And in this case, it is also manifestly absurd. The answer to a world of too many nuclear weapons obviously is not a world of more nuclear explosions.

In short, the CTB can either bring an end to nuclear explosive testing, or it can be twisted into a misshapen and ineffectual pry-bar for other goals. But if we burden it with both tasks, it will fracture and do neither.

It would be not just deeply ironic, but tragic, if one of the international community's highest goals for 40 years suddenly lost its appeal just as the world was about to grasp it. The appeal of the unattainable may be the stuff of great love sonnets - but it is not sensible policy or diplomacy. We should not perversely veer away from the CTB because it is at last within reach.

Rather, this is a time for the world to keep its eye on the prize that stands immediately and attainably before it: a truly comprehensive ban on all nuclear-weapon test explosions, or any other nuclear explosions.

(Mr. Holum, United States)

We have a major, but surmountable, challenge ahead to meet the standard set for us by the global community.

United Nations General Assembly resolution 50/65 calls for conclusion of the negotiations so that the treaty can be opened for signature prior to the convening of the fifty-first General Assembly. If it is not completed by April, then the Conference must seriously take stock of how to make use of the remaining weeks prior to the end of the second part of this session. For it is imperative to report the complete text of the CTBT to the General Assembly by June, at the very latest, if we are to allow for its examination in capitals and then endorsement by the General Assembly that it be opened for signature by the agreed date.

Everyone is aware of the rolling text, and its more than 1,000 pairs of brackets. To resolve them promptly is indeed a daunting task. But it can be completed, or virtually so, by the end of the first part of this session. Why do I make such a bold statement? Because, in fact, there are far from 1,000 issues involved in the brackets. The basic issues are only a few, and their resolution - primarily a matter of political decisions - will allow the prompt removal or condensation of large tracts of disputed text.

But we must be keenly aware that this moment of unparalleled opportunity is fleeting, that the window of opportunity now open before us may be slammed shut as early as this summer. And we must act accordingly.

This means all of us must work in a businesslike spirit of accommodation and compromise. It demands that we not interpose new obstacles, but rather cut through the underbrush - abandoning placeholder language, stances taken with the intention of some day being bargained away, pet positions that do not command serious international support. The time has come to move to closure on common ground.

It is in this spirit that President Clinton withdrew last year the United States proposal for a 10-year withdrawal right. In the same spirit, in August, President Clinton, as you know, announced the United States commitment to a true-zero-yield CTBT - with no exceptions. We have been working hard to find common ground on other outstanding issues.

But time is short: we now have only 49 negotiating days left before the end of the first part of this session. So we must do all that is necessary - in capitals no less than here in Geneva - to ensure that every hour of every one of these 49 days is used to utmost effect.

Any slippage from this demanding schedule could be fatal to the treaty. And any delays will only expose the treaty to further risks. A treaty once more deferred may be a CTB denied.

So my overarching message is this: We are closer to success than many think. We can meet the deadline - if we turn our attention not to protecting options or preserving bargaining chips, but to completing this historic mission.

(Mr. Holum, United States)

The CTB has been the first item on the agenda of this body from its inaugural meetings. As our predecessors know all too well, the CTB's history is long and tortuous; and still it lacks a worthy conclusion.

But all the while two things have remained constant. Nuclear testing has continued. And the world's store of knowledge about how nuclear weapons work has continued to expand, with no end in sight.

At this moment of promise and peril, two potential races beckon us. One is the sprint to the finish of a truly comprehensive ban on all nuclear explosions. The other race is all too familiar - the arms competition that has brought into the world so many deadly weapons, at such cost in talent and treasure.

In the next 10 weeks, we can win the former race, and so help end the latter for all time.

And if the Conference on Disarmament cannot conclude its work, our failure will be a grave set-back not just for arms control, but for multilateral institutions and multilateral diplomacy more broadly. It will be ammunition for the cynics who claim that nothing truly important should be entrusted to such bodies.

The world's nuclear weapons have been tested in over 2,000 explosions at more than 20 locations around the globe. Their deadly efficacy is all too clear.

Now, here in this body, the workings of another way of resolving humanity's disagreements are on trial. Now it is we who are being tested.

We dare not fail. Our success will ring through ages to come.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to the representative of Peru, Ambassador Urrutia, who will speak in his capacity as the Coordinator of the Group of 21.

Mr. URRUTIA (Peru) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, first of all allow me to take the floor on behalf of my own delegation in order to express our satisfaction at seeing you in the Chair of the Conference on Disarmament in this initial phase of the 1996 session. You may be sure that you can count on the full cooperation and support of my delegation in discharging your functions. My delegation also wishes to congratulate and thank your predecessor, Ambassador Benjelloun of Morocco, for the way in which he conducted our work in the last phase of 1995. We would also like to express our appreciation for the work done by the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament, and in particular to Mr. Petrovsky, the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations as well as Mr. Bensmail for his effective and constant efforts.

(Mr. Urrutia, Peru)

In my capacity as Coordinator I will now read out a statement by the Group of 21 on nuclear disarmament.

(continued in English)

"The G.21 reiterates its previous statement contained in document CD/1359 of 22 September 1995, and recalls that in the discussions within the CD it has consistently pressed for commencement of negotiations in the CD on nuclear disarmament. This objective has been accorded the highest priority by the international community.

"The G.21 regrets the refusal by certain member States of the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate on the issue of nuclear disarmament in the Conference, which is the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament issues.

"The G.21 States parties to the NPT are of the view that, following the adoption by the NPT Conference of its decision on 'Principles and objectives', an agreement must be reached among CD members for the inclusion on the CD agenda of an item on nuclear disarmament and the immediate establishment of an ad hoc committee to negotiate a nuclear disarmament treaty.

"The G.21 stresses that General Assembly resolution 50/70 P of 12 December 1995 calls on the CD to establish, on a priority basis, an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament to commence negotiations early in 1996 on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament and for the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. The decisions and recommendations on nuclear disarmament contained in the final document of the Cartagena summit meeting of non-aligned countries underscores the same objective.

"The G.21 therefore calls for the immediate establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament in accordance with these decisions.

"The G.21 reiterates its resolve to work assiduously towards ridding our planet of the threat of nuclear weapons in the same manner as the international community has dealt with biological/toxin weapons and chemical weapons."

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Peru for his statement on behalf of the Group of 21 and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Romania, Ambassador Neagu.

Mr. NEAGU (Romania): Mr. President, the first month in the work of the Conference on Disarmament's annual session is the most stimulating but also the most challenging period. The 1996 CD session indeed makes no exception to that rule. It is for me a distinct pleasure to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Conference and wish you every success in discharging the special responsibilities always entrusted to the first President of a

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

CD annual session. Allow me also to express my deep appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Benjelloun-Touimi of Morocco, who served as President in an exemplary manner during the last part of the 1995 session. Let me warmly salute Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and his deputy, Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail. We shall entirely rely on their professional, dedicated and efficient assistance. I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to extend a cordial welcome to the new colleagues who have taken up their duties as representatives of their countries to the Conference - Ambassadors Caballero of Cuba, Tolle of Kenya and Abuah of Nigeria.

Released from the fetters of bipolarity and of the cold war, the international system regained its natural freedom of movement. The relinquishing of the politics of confrontation and the diminishing of the nuclear threat have triggered a vast and complex process of international détente by setting up a genuine framework for dialogue and cooperation among States. A new and promising political climate has emerged, generating conditions for important achievements in the field of disarmament and international security.

One of the most crucial dividends of this new era is undoubtedly the historic decision to make the NPT permanent. The Government of Romania is proud to be one of the contributors to that decision, which it considers as instrumental in underpinning the worldwide efforts to halt the spread of nuclear weapons while making the benefits of nuclear energy available to all mankind for peaceful purposes.

As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania stated before the fiftieth session of the United Nations, my country is confident that the extension of the NPT will make the negotiations on the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction also progress significantly and will lead to a permanent ban on any kind of nuclear tests, to enhanced security guarantees and to increased transparency in the field of armaments.

According to the programme of action embodied in the "Principles and objective for nuclear disarmament", 1996 is expected to be the year of completing the CTBT, a long-sought objective in the process of arms control and disarmament. Much, and encouraging, progress has been achieved in important areas of negotiations on the "rolling text" during the 1995 session of the CD. Yet crucial issues remain to be settled, such as the scope of the treaty and basic obligations, the final architecture of the international monitoring system, on-site verification activities and the future CTBT organization.

At a stage when our negotiations are about to enter the decisive phase on all relevant aspects, Romania wishes to reiterate its firm stand for a universal and effectively verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty. We hold that the CTBT must ban all nuclear tests, everywhere and forever, and, in this

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

respect, we welcome the decisions taken by France, the United States and the United Kingdom to support the "zero-yield" test ban as a major breakthrough in moving towards agreement on the scope article.

For a CTBT to be credible and to attract the adherence of all States, it should be provided with a verification mechanism able to accurately deter suspect events and possible non-compliance. Romania endorses the option for a robust but cost-effective international system providing for collection of data through seismic, hydroacoustic, radionuclide and infrasound techniques, prompt, mandatory on-site inspections as well as a consultation and clarification procedure and "associated measures" for the exchange of information that could help resolve ambiguities. Likewise, we see the CTBT implementing body as separate but co-located with IAEA in Vienna, relatively small in size and personnel, requiring the least possible financial resources from contributing member States and enjoying, at the same time, a sound functional relationship with the Agency.

The CD has no more important task in 1996 than completing the CTBT. Romania shares the view that no effort should be spared in order to finalize the text of the treaty by the first part of this session. As underlined by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his message to the Conference, "nothing must be allowed to deter this objective". Let me take this opportunity to express our highest appreciation for the fruitful work that has been done by the former Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, my neighbour Ambassador Ludwik Dembinski of Poland. At the same time, I sincerely hope that this work will be continued in the framework of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, which has to be re-established with no further delay, so that we could get down to negotiations immediately in order to solve the outstanding problems ahead of us.

While giving priority to the NTB negotiations, the Romanian delegation is confident that the time ahead could also be used for deepening the debate and narrowing the gap on other important issues on our agenda, many of them closely related to a CTBT.

A multilateral, effectively verifiable convention to prohibit the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices cannot but complement the nuclear test-ban regime by capping the amount of fissile material available for explosive military purposes not only in nuclear-weapons States, but also in those States which currently have unsafeguarded enrichment or reprocessing plants. It will contribute to ensuring the conditions under which the process of nuclear disarmament can broaden, constrain the opportunities for vertical proliferation and help prevent any future resumption of the nuclear arms race.

The year 1995 marked an encouraging development in this field because for the first time the CD has agreed to establish a "cut-off" ad hoc committee with a negotiating mandate. We believe that the consensus on the important initiative on banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

and other nuclear explosive devices must be preserved and brought to fruition. The difficulties in tackling the "fiss-ban" question, such as the scope of the convention, how to avoid precluding the production of fissile material for peaceful or non-prescribed purposes, and the setting up of an efficient and objective verification mechanism, should not impede but rather stimulate our endeavours to come to mutually accepted solutions.

The issue of security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States also registered significant progress in 1995. The declarations issued by each of the five nuclear Powers and Security Council resolution 984, adopted by consensus, largely responded to the legitimate aspirations of non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT. At the same time, the NPT Conference agreed that further steps in this area should be considered, including the conclusion of "an internationally legally binding instrument".

This completely coincides with Romania's own position, and we hope that conditions will be created to further explore this question.

While giving the highest priority to various aspects of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, the CD should not neglect conventional armaments, a scourge inextricably linked with all the armed conflicts which have erupted on Earth during the last five decades.

My delegation deplores the fact that the useful work done in the Ad Hoc Committee on TIA has been suspended in 1995. And we hope that, in resuming the 1996 session, the CD will be able to establish from the very beginning the respective subsidiary body.

Measures to curb the excessive production, development and build-up of such weapons need to be urgently addressed and adopted. Among these measures, ensuring transparency and self-restraint in arms transfers is of paramount importance. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms thus constitutes a significant step forward in the promotion of transparency in military matters, while proving itself to be a viable instrument capable of attracting the widest possible participation. Current proposals that already participating States should encourage and assist others to adhere, through a kind of "partnership approach", are most commendable in order to attain the universality of the Register. Romania also supports the concept of regional and subregional variants of the Register and applauds the United Nations Centre for Disarmament Affairs for including this option in its programme aiming at promoting the merits of transparency through the Register.

In the same spirit, Romania associated itself with the statement presented on behalf of the European Union at the fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, that it is necessary for all States to adopt responsible policies in matters relating to transfers of conventional weapons. While adopting such a policy through internal regulations and mechanisms, my country has long been promoting the goals of openness and transparency in arms transfers within the CD, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and other

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

appropriate forums. In June 1993 Romania submitted at the CD the proposal for a "Code of conduct for international transfers of conventional weapons" aiming at establishing a universal and non-discriminatory set of principles and criteria to promote openness, mutual respect for each other's security interests and, on that basis, voluntary restraint and responsibility in this field.

We continue to feel that it is in the interest of all countries, big or small, and especially in the interest of smaller, developing ones, faced with problems of chaotic, frequently illegal, ever-growing conventional arms that, as the Secretary-General of the United Nations put it, kill hundreds of thousands of innocent people, to establish such a code of conduct.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Romania for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage?

If not, I shall now suspend this plenary meeting and, as I announced earlier, I shall convene immediately an informal meeting open to the members of the Conference only - I repeat, open to the members of the Conference only - to consider the draft agenda for the 1996 session of the Conference (contained in CD/WP.469), the draft decision on the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban (contained in CD/WP.470), the remarks I intend to make following the consideration of these two draft decisions, as well as the requests for participation by non-member States in the work of the Conference, as contained in document CD/WP.468.

The meeting was suspended at 11.45 a.m. and resumed at 12.45 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: The 721st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

I should like to take up for decision the draft agenda of the Conference for its 1996 session as contained in document CD/WP.469. May I consider that the Conference adopts this agenda?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Peru has asked for the floor, on behalf of the Group of 21.

Mr. URRUTIA (Peru) (translated from Spanish): The Group of 21 considers that the agenda just adopted for the 1996 session is a provisional one until such time as the Special Coordinator of the Conference for the review of the future agenda submits his report on the consultations he has held on this subject.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Peru for his statement made on behalf of the Group of 21.

(The President)

With respect to the last paragraph of the document we have just adopted, I should like to stress that both myself and my successors will spare no effort to ensure that the decision taken last year by the Conference in document CD/1356 is implemented at the earliest possible date.

I should now like to turn to the draft decision on the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, as contained in document CD/WP.470. May I take it that the Conference decides to adopt this decision?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Jaap Ramaker of the Netherlands on his appointment as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban and wish him every success in his endeavours.

With respect to the other items on the agenda, I understand that there is consensus to appoint a Special Coordinator to consult on the review of the future agenda of the Conference as well as on organizational arrangements to deal with the following issues: the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; prevention of an arms race in outer space; and transparency in armaments. I propose to appoint Ambassador Hocine Meghlaoui of Algeria as Special Coordinator on these issues. May I take it that this proposal is acceptable?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Allow me to congratulate Ambassador Meghlaoui of Algeria on his appointment as Special Coordinator and wish him every success in his efforts.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, one group reiterated the importance it attached to this issue and requested that an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament be established immediately. This view was shared by another delegation. Some delegations from another group expressed willingness to agree to the appointment of a Special Coordinator to deal with the issue of nuclear disarmament. Another group supported the idea that the President of the Conference, or a Special Coordinator to be appointed by him, would consult on how to address all the other items on the agenda, including nuclear disarmament. I intend to conduct intensive consultations with a view to developing a basis for consensus on this issue and to report to the Conference at the earliest opportunity.

Finally, I wish to invite you to consider the requests for participation in our work during the 1996 session from States not members of the Conference. The secretariat has so far received requests from a total of 49 States. Of these 49, we have 23 States listed in the CD decision (CD/1356) of

(The President)

21 September 1995. May I take it that we accept their application for participation in the work of the CD as non-member States, in accordance with the rules of procedure?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I assume that the remaining 26 States who have also applied for participation in the work of the CD as non-member States, as contained in CD/WP.468, namely Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Ghana, Greece, the Holy See, Iceland, Ireland, Jordan, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malta, Nicaragua, Oman, the Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Slovenia, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia and the United Republic of Tanzania are also acceptable in accordance with the rules of procedure?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I thank all delegations for the spirit of compromise and flexibility which allowed us to embark on our substantive work without delay.

Does any delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? Morocco has asked for the floor, and after Morocco, Ambassador Ramaker.

Mr. BENJELLOUN-TOUIMI (Morocco): Thank you, Mr. President. I will have another occasion to formally congratulate you and to thank everybody for the kind words addressed to me. Today, I wanted simply to make a few remarks as outgoing President of this Conference on the issue of expansion of the membership of the Conference.

Basically, I want to report on what I promised I would do during the inter-sessional period. You will remember that, before taking the decision (CD/1356) on 21 September 1995, I took it upon myself to report to the CD on the issue of expansion of membership, including on the remaining 12 applications. Unfortunately, and this is why I am taking the floor today, I was not able to conduct proper consultations on this particular subject, for reasons beyond my control. Basically, the members of the CD during this period were in New York, and I was not able to conduct consultations on this subject. I wanted those States outside the Group of 23 - which means all the other States who are interested in becoming members of the CD - to know that we did not forget about this issue and that I remain, as representative of Morocco, committed to seeing to it that this question is tackled by this President, and the next ones. I would like to congratulate our President for the commitment that he made in his statement today on this subject, and also for furthering the decision that was taken in September, that is the decision on the 23 States that are "members-to-be", and this status of "members-to-be" should not be a permanent status but really a transitory one. And the sooner the better. And my message and my commitment to them in this room is that we should definitely not try to forget about them, by saying that we took a decision in September but we will wait until next September to do something about it, just to prepare for the next session of the General Assembly. I think that we should definitely - and I am placing this on record - that we

(Mr. Benjelloun-Touimi, Morocco)

should look into ways and means to be able to implement the second decision, because without the second decision, the first one is meaningless, and it would even become a liability for those countries and for the Conference. So I would simply like to appeal to all members of the CD to make an extra effort to deal with the issue, not only of the 23 "members-to-be" of the Conference - and to try to start integrating them into our process of negotiations and consultations - but also to deal with the other 12 countries that are interested in becoming members of the Conference. We should address the right questions, starting with the one I have in mind, which is: "How many should we be in the CD to be able to negotiate effectively?" We have to answer that question before we can go any further, and I think we should do it as soon as possible. I am aware that there are political realities and that things cannot be resolved within a few days, but I think that if we put our will to it, we will be able to solve it to the benefit of the Conference as well as for the entire international community. We are not going to be able to negotiate universal agreements, treaties and conventions if we do not have a representative CD. And the membership of the CD today does not represent the international community properly and we definitely have to do something about it. This is basically my message, as a former President of the Conference, and I wanted to be transparent and to tell those to whom I made a commitment to do my best for them, but to whom I was unfortunately not able to deliver. I wanted them to know why and assure them that we are still committed to this end.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Benjelloun for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria, Ambassador Meghlaoui.

Mr. MEGHLAOUI (Algeria) (translated from French): Mr. President, I am delighted to join those who have congratulated you on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. You are taking the Chair at the initial stage of the 1996 session, which I hope will be a historic session in the full sense of the term. You have thus the special responsibility of preparing the Conference for its work and getting it off to a good start. That is a major challenge which you have already taken up to a great extent. We have all been able to appreciate your diplomatic qualities, your patience, your innate sense of compromise, in the consultations before the official opening of this session. You can be assured of the full support of the Algerian delegation. It will do all it possibly can to help you in carrying out your task. I would also like to extend my congratulations to your predecessor, Ambassador Benjelloun of Morocco, for his efforts during the final stage of the 1995 session. Lastly, I would like to welcome our new colleagues from Cuba, Kenya and Nigeria. I wish to assure them of full cooperation from the Algerian delegation.

The Conference on Disarmament has just decided to give me the task of conducting consultations on the future agenda of the CD, and you were the first to congratulate me, for which many thanks. It is with great humility that I accept this responsibility, whose significance I, and indeed all of us, fully appreciate. I am sure that everyone here is aware of the need to review

(Mr. Meghlaoui, Algeria)

the agenda, and everyone is also aware of the complexity of that task, as I am sure that I will be able to count on assistance from each delegation to carry out the mandate that the CD has decided to entrust to me. The sense of compromise which prevailed at the initial part of this session gives grounds for optimism. Let us hope that it will last, in the interest of all.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Meghlaoui for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

The secretariat, at my request, has prepared a tentative timetable of meetings for the current week. As you may see, it is envisaged that the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban will take place this afternoon at 3 p.m. in this room. This timetable was prepared in consultation with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands. It is merely indicative and subject to change if necessary. May I take it that the Conference decides to adopt this timetable?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Now I give the floor to Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands.

Mr. RAMAKER (Netherlands): First of all, Mr. President, thank you for your kind words on my appointment as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. My delegation would hope to be able, on another occasion, to congratulate you in a more formal manner on the outstanding way in which you have prepared the session of the Conference this year and for the way you have guided us through our work which has enabled the Conference to so promptly re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. I would simply like to draw the attention of delegations at this moment to what you just said, to the informal paper that was circulated by the secretariat containing a timetable of meetings for this week. It is, indeed, my intention to call a meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban this afternoon at 3 p.m., and I would like on that occasion to share with delegations, first of all, the general approach that the Chair intends to take with regard to its work in the coming period of negotiations and, secondly, also to give some more details, in particular, on how we see the rest of this week go on, so that delegations have an idea of what it is we can do in the time that is available to us this week and in the time slots that are mentioned in the informal paper.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Ramaker for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

As our agenda for today is exhausted - like your President - I intend now to adjourn this meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference will take place on Thursday, 25 January at 10 a.m. sharp.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.722
25 January 1996

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 25 January 1996 at 10 a.m.

President: U Aye (Myanmar)

GE.96-60296 (E)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 722nd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of India, Australia, Poland, South Africa, Japan, Morocco and the Republic of Korea. I now give the floor to the representative of India, Ambassador Ghose.

Mrs. GHOSE (India): I would like to take this opportunity to join the other speakers before me in congratulating you on your assuming the presidency of the CD at the beginning of what could be a critical year for this forum. I can assure you of our cooperation in the tasks before you. We are aware of the stand taken by Myanmar on the issues before the CD and have had the privilege of working closely and fruitfully with you before. We have noted with appreciation the industry and fairness you have personally already brought to the job, particularly in trying to deal with the strongly divergent views held by delegations on the programme of work of this session. I also take this opportunity to thank most sincerely the previous President, Ambassador Nacer Benjelloun-Touimi of Morocco, for his friendly, industrious and sincere efforts to try and find solutions to some of the issues before the Conference during his presidency. I also welcome warmly our three new colleagues (who happen to be from the Group of 21) who have recently joined the CD - the distinguished Ambassadors of Cuba, Kenya and Nigeria.

We do indeed see 1996 as a testing time for all of us in the CD. I have been told, and I agree, that the international community and international public opinion - from north and south, east and west - has great expectations of us. We need to be conscious of this.

We start this session at a time when our apprehensions relating to the international security environment have increased, rather than, as had been optimistically expected some years ago, diminished.

Less than a year ago, the NPT was indefinitely extended. This single act resulted in the legitimization, for the foreseeable future and beyond, of the possession of nuclear weapons by a few States and their possible use as a currency of power. This is not just India's view. This has been argued by some of the States themselves before the International Court of Justice. That winding down of nuclear weapons is not yet part of the global agenda has also been demonstrated and emphasized to the world by subsequent events. Nuclear-weapon States continue to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on their arsenals and plan on new facilities for continuing weapons-related research and development.

We are not unaware that these States undertook to make "progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons". But I think that we are justified in our scepticism as this undertaking was followed by reassertions by some of these countries citing reasons of their security, of their continuing need not only to possess these weapons but to ensure their reliability - for use. Other developments, including announcements of "subcritical" tests for the refinement of nuclear weapons, and proposals for political discussions on the

(Mrs. Ghose, India)

future role of nuclear weapons to ensure the security of some nuclear-weapon States and their allies, and the inconsistency of these developments with the avowed goal of nuclear disarmament, have been noted by us with growing unease.

We have noted the steps taken by two nuclear-weapon States to begin a process of dismantling their nuclear weapons. We are vitally interested in the progress of this process and would encourage its widening and deepening, since even after the planned reduction, huge stockpiles of weapons will remain. These existing weapons continue to pose a threat and it is on this that our attention is focused today. Clearly, such a perpetually discriminatory environment will be perceived as unstable, provoking countries to unilateralism rather than collective security. Given the possibility of treating the perpetuation of the NPT as providing an indefinite licence for possession of nuclear weapons, it becomes even more imperative to have a legally binding commitment to eliminate these weapons in a specific time-frame.

Global nuclear disarmament has been a major objective of India's foreign policy since independence. We are also conscious that disarmament cannot be achieved while proliferation continues. However, non-proliferation cannot be an end in itself and loses moral credibility unless it is unambiguously linked to disarmament. We have demonstrated our commitment to non-proliferation by voluntarily and unilaterally exercising the most rigorous control on our peaceful nuclear programme. Possession of nuclear weapons by any country constitutes a wider threat and this is not only a matter of principle but of the safety and security of all nations and of all peoples.

It was for these reasons that India joined the other members of the G-21 in calling for the immediate establishment in the CD of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament to start negotiations on a phased programme with the eventual aim of eliminating all nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework.

We were, and are, therefore deeply disturbed that some States that possess nuclear weapons appear unwilling to start addressing the security concerns of other States. That concerns on this issue are widely shared is evident from the clear messages received not only from the United Nations General Assembly but from the heads of State and Government of the majority of the world community in Cartagena last year. Mr. President, we sincerely hope that you will be able to undertake serious and intensive consultations on this issue over the next week or two, and we hope that you will succeed in getting a satisfactory agreement at an early date. In the CD, we must be able to start negotiations on a time-bound programme for the elimination of nuclear weapons early this year. This makes 1996 a year critical to the CD and to the future of all disarmament negotiations.

It is in this context that we envision the future negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. To have a multilaterally negotiated CTBT was India's proposal four decades ago. Even at that time, we had stated clearly that the CTBT was only a first step towards complete nuclear disarmament. If implemented then, the number of States with nuclear weapons and the number, types and the range of weapons in the possession of those that have them would have been much less and, in our opinion, nuclear disarmament would by now have

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been within our grasp. During these four decades the nuclear-weapon States have undertaken extensive testing programmes. This only makes it important that, as we take this step for a CTBT, we ensure that it is a step on the road to nuclear disarmament rather than into a cul-de-sac. In October 1995, addressing the NAM summit in Cartagena, my Prime Minister had "wholeheartedly" supported the goals of the CTBT in the context of obtaining a commitment to universal and comprehensive disarmament. India's views on this matter were last formally made known by us in the First Committee of the last United Nations General Assembly, when, referring to the CTBT negotiations, we stated: "We are determined to continue our contribution to this process with a view to concluding a good treaty in 1996 ... In our view, the CTBT must be an integral step in the process of nuclear disarmament. Developing new warheads or refining existing ones after the CTBT is in place, using innovative technologies, would be as contrary to the spirit of the CTBT as the NPT is to the spirit of non-proliferation".

India is committed to working towards a CTBT that will promote the universally enunciated goal of total nuclear disarmament, and thereby the lasting and legitimate security interests of all countries in a nuclear-weapon-free-world, including our own interests. In this spirit, we have been actively participating in the CTBT negotiations and will continue to be so engaged with the aim of achieving our goals.

We are aware that much work remains to be done on the CTBT text. We have yet to come to grips with several major technical and political issues, including the scope of the treaty, the verification regime, on-site inspections, the IMS architecture, the financing of both the new organization and the IMS, the composition of the Executive Council, the articles relating to withdrawal and entry into force, etc. There are, however, key issues which have centrality for India and other States. We are of the view that, to be meaningful, the treaty should be securely anchored in the global disarmament context and be linked through treaty language to the elimination of all nuclear weapons in a time-bound framework. We, therefore, intend to make concrete textual proposals in this regard at an appropriate stage so that the CTBT does not become just another flawed instrument aimed at curbing horizontal proliferation but a genuine disarmament step which terminates, for all States, without discrimination, the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear-weapon systems. If the CTBT were to enter into force without a credible commitment for the elimination of nuclear weapons we would have lost yet another opportunity to work determinedly towards achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Another crucial issue relates to the article on the "scope" of the treaty. We continue to believe in a truly comprehensive test-ban treaty - that is, a treaty which bans all kinds of nuclear-weapons testing. As the PTBT drove testing underground, we do not wish the CTBT to drive testing into the laboratories by those who have the resources to do so. We must ensure that the CTBT leaves no loophole for activity, either explosive-based or non-explosive-based, aimed at the continued development and refinement of nuclear weapons. Consequently, this political intent needs to be reflected in the CTBT clearly defining our objective - a treaty which will bring an end to all nuclear-weapons development, not constrained by artificial limits of

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verification. The situation would be untenable where, even with a CTBT in place, development, refinement and production of new nuclear weapons continues. The CTBT must not become only an environmental treaty - important though the environmental consequences of test explosions may be. The CTBT, to be credible and meaningful, must be truly comprehensive and part of a genuine disarmament process. We have already presented language to cover our point of view. We would be willing to examine any other language which would address our concerns.

Verbal prestidigitation cannot provide answers to the issues that we are addressing. These need to be worked out through patient and transparent negotiations conducted in good faith and taking into account all legitimate national concerns. We look forward to consolidating the gains of the work done in recent weeks in areas where we have reached consensus. True solutions have to be found where there are differences. We will do our best to move the negotiations forward and will participate sincerely and actively in any joint search for solutions.

In conclusion, I would like to express our hope that this year the CD will move towards fulfilling not only international expectations but also the purpose for which this body was created and will be able to demonstrate the courage and determination needed to address issues which impact on all human beings, from whichever part of the world, of whatever race, colour or creed, and which can make the difference between international insecurity and international peace.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of India for her statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador Starr.

Mr. STARR (Australia): Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you formally on assumption of the presidency of this Conference and to congratulate you most warmly on the smooth and effective start to the proceedings. Your guidance and leadership were critical elements in this achievement. I assure you of the support of the Australian delegation and look forward to working with you closely. I would also like to welcome our new colleagues. The Australian delegation looks forward to working with you in the work of this Conference.

I wish to address the priority issue before this Conference: the negotiation and conclusion of a treaty text on a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

It was in 1954 that the comprehensive nuclear test ban first emerged as a prominent issue on the international disarmament agenda. 1954 was a long time ago. Stalin had just died, while Eisenhower, Mao Tse-tung and Nehru were familiar figures. My colleagues in the Australian delegation had not yet been born.

For the international community this has been a long, long haul. Since 1957, the General Assembly has adopted some 80 resolutions relating to nuclear testing. With the First Committee still fresh in our minds, we can imagine

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how much money, time and talent has gone into those 80 resolutions. Australia is proud to have been engaged with others in the struggle over many years to have those resolutions come to express the united and unopposed views of the international community.

The Conference on Disarmament and its predecessors have discussed the subject since 1962. Over the last 30 years the PTBT, the TTBT and the NPT were concluded, but never a CTBT.

Why has this been so difficult a task? Resolution of a CTBT is hard precisely because it is meaningful. A test-ban treaty constitutes a genuine step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons, and such a step could never be taken during the cold war decades.

A ban on testing will block the emergence of new generations of nuclear weapons. It binds the nuclear capabilities of the nuclear-weapon States. A CTBT will break the spiral of qualitative competition between the nuclear-weapon States and open the way for further nuclear weapons reductions. It amounts to a legally binding expression of the end of the nuclear arms race.

Thus, a CTBT will have an important normative and practical impact on disarmament and non-proliferation. Indeed, the significance of a test ban has been graphically demonstrated by the reluctance of some States to cease testing despite worldwide condemnation. It is why Australia has so strongly and consistently opposed further tests by any States. It is why the moratoriums declared and observed by nuclear-weapon States are vital to the negotiations.

Now we are moving in a determined way to take this fundamental step towards the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. For the moment, the strategic uncertainties and suspicions that fuelled nuclear-weapon development in the cold war do not apply. If squandered, this opportunity will slip from our grasp. We will be left with only recrimination at our failure.

Resolution 50/65, adopted at last year's Assembly without a vote, recognized the significance of the task, and the importance of seizing this opportunity as soon as possible in 1996. The guidance from the international community provides the firm expectation that we will conclude a CTBT in time for signature by the outset of the fifty-first General Assembly in September. That resolution makes clear that we in the CD are expected to complete these 40-odd years of debate and negotiation on schedule.

Thus Australia welcomes the prompt re-establishment of the NTB Ad Hoc Committee and the appointment of the Ambassador of the Netherlands, Jaap Ramaker, as its Chairman and commends his immediate, businesslike start to the task before us. Any other outcome this week would have been untenable and I applaud the commitment of delegations which enabled such a positive result.

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The 1996 target dates for conclusion and signature accepted by the overwhelming majority are both necessary and attainable. Our 1995 session, under the chairmanship of Professor Dembinski, saw a very substantial refinement and improvement in the rolling text. We start with a far better platform for negotiations than a year ago.

While many significant matters require finalization, we believe only two areas stand between us and achievement of the treaty - scope and on-site inspection.

On scope, my delegation continues to believe that the shape of convergence of views is clear enough. We are banning nuclear explosions. There must be a true-zero-yield standard, and there can be no exceptions. All five nuclear-weapon States need to coalesce around this objective and ensure that this is crystallized in text They bear a heavy but obvious responsibility. The cost of not finalizing text in the near future will inevitably produce a sense of drift and a questioning of commitment. In our view the widely supported language in CD/NTB/WP.222 effectively captures this objective.

We still believe advocacy of an over-extension of the scope of the treaty through attempts to cover wide-ranging nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation goals is over-ambitious and unhelpful in concluding a test-ban treaty.

On on-site inspection, I think it fair to say we are still some way from convergence, but the fact is we can and must make rapid progress. We believe that the complex of interrelated issues will need to be resolved in a balanced package. Within this package it will be essential to guarantee the principle of access; timely deployment of the inspection; effective use of all relevant information; and assurance against abuse, including the elaboration of managed access provisions. Balanced reflection of these principles is necessary if on-site inspection, in combination with other elements of the verification regime, is to provide the necessary deterrence against breaches of the treaty.

We know that many other issues are still to be decided, but generally these problems are localized. And often the outcomes are evident enough. Does any delegation seriously doubt, for example, that if there is a CTBT the organization will be in Vienna, co-located in the International Centre with IAEA, and with appropriate treaty language permitting links with that and other organizations? Some few matters like entry into force and the Executive Council have been deferred, though they must remain on our negotiating agenda. It is unthinkable, however, that negotiations should break down over issues such as these.

Of course, in the end success depends on the States negotiating the text agreeing to each compromises, compromises which sensibly and fairly meet the several and varying security interests of participants. This is the object of frequent and understandable calls for commitment, for political will. Every State seeks the best treaty from its own perspective, and in these concluding months some may be tempted to seek leverage from the limited time available to

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demand more than their share. But in the end, if we are to have a treaty, a satisfactory treaty, there will have to be compromise, and restraint, if we are to pursue successfully our common self-interest in achieving a CTBT.

To that end we must not lose sight of our goal. We need a convention which bans nuclear-test explosions and which provides adequate deterrence against violations while constraining abuse of any provisions. And we need that treaty both for the disarmament and non-proliferation benefits of the step itself and also because, at this point, a CTBT is the best available route towards broader objective in nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Envisage the jungle ahead if these negotiations fail this year.

At the start of my statement I said that the treaty mattered to Australians. It matters to us because we are serious about nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Late last year, our Prime Minister, Mr. Paul Keating, announced the establishment of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Mr. Keating took this initiative because of his conviction that if the aim of the world without nuclear weapons is ever to be realized the issue must be placed more firmly and centrally on the international agenda. Yesterday, at the first meeting of this Commission of independent individuals eminent in their fields, the Australian Foreign Minister, and I read from his statement, said:

> "The task confronting the Commission is as ambitious and important as any task could possible be. It is to make the case, if it can be made, as to why the world should now strive for the absolute elimination of nuclear weapons. It is to make the case, if it can be made, as to how such elimination might be achieved in practice, and it is to articulate these cases, assuming they can be made, in such clear and compelling terms that Governments around the world will be persuaded to make the necessary commitment and take the necessary action."

The Commission has been asked to look ahead, to come up with ideas and workable steps towards a nuclear-weapons-free world. It is intended to encourage negotiations to eliminate stockpiles through a systematic process. The Commission will also look at what international security arrangements will be needed both globally and regionally, including a system of stable deterrence while the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is being achieved. As a forum outside the United Nations, but very much in sympathy with the objectives of its Members, it will submit its findings in a report to the 1996 General Assembly as well as to the Conference on Disarmament.

Not so long ago a commission of this type risked being little more than a rhetorical flourish. But times have changed. Current and planned reductions in nuclear arsenals following the end of the cold war, the unanimous decision to extend the NPT, the commitment of the international community to conclude a CTBT this year and the dismay with which much of the world reacted to continued nuclear testing, all show us that the time is right to take a fresh look at concepts of security and the role of nuclear weapons, and to start charting a practical process towards their elimination.

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As to our motives, we Australians are convinced that in the new international environment our security and the security of the people of the world at large will be better served if we can eliminate nuclear weapons, as we have moved to eliminate other weapons of mass destruction.

Thus, we view support for CTBT negotiations - the first real multilateral step towards elimination - and for their successful, swift conclusion, as a measure of a country's seriousness of purpose in seeking nuclear disarmament. In any scenario, the failure of the international community to conclude and sign a CTBT this year would be a severe and long-lasting setback to aspirations for progress.

Let us go on to build on the work done by past delegations, let us build on recent welcome political commitments given by all delegations engaged in the negotiations, and let us meet the expectation of the international community that the 1996 Conference on Disarmament will deliver a CTBT, to be signed at the outset of the fifty-first General Assembly.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Australia for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I shall now give the floor to the representative of Poland, Ambassador Dembinski, who, as outgoing Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, will present that Committee's report on its inter-sessional work, contained in document CD/1378.

Mr. DEMBINSKI (Poland): Mr. President, let me first salute you as President of the Conference on Disarmament at this decisive moment of its new session. I should like to congratulate you on your remarkable success in the expeditious launching of this session and making it possible for the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban to commence its business without any delay. I also extend a warm welcome to our new colleagues, the distinguished representatives of Cuba, Kenya and Nigeria.

As the outgoing Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, I have the honour to present to the Conference on Disarmament a report on its work during the period 8 to 19 January 1996. I understand that this document (CD/1378) has already been circulated.

As will be recalled, that inter-sessional effort was undertaken in accordance with the decision of the Conference on Disarmament contained in paragraph 23 of its report to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

In its substance, the negotiating effort represented a direct continuation of the work programme of 1995 and preparation for the session of 1996. Thanks to the constructive involvement and dedication of delegations, the brief two-week period available to the Ad Hoc Committee was put to intensive and very productive use resulting in important revisions to the rolling text.

Specifically, Working Group 1, chaired by Ambassador Norberg of Sweden, considered different aspects of the rolling text pertaining to verification. In this exercise, it had the benefit of the recommendations of an IMS Expert

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Group on monitoring technologies to be relied on for CTBT compliance. Meeting between 4 and 15 December 1995, the session brought together 82 experts from 29 States.

The Working Group also reviewed draft language on the international monitoring system, on-site inspections as well as associated measures and recommended some changes to the rolling text of the treaty. Moreover, the Working Group took note with great appreciation of the presentations of the Friend of the Chair on technical aspects of the International Data Centre concerning the incorporation of infrasound, hydroacoustic and radionuclide data into the International Data Centre as well as a preliminary transition plan.

In turn, Working Group 2, chaired by Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands, dealt with various aspects of the rolling text pertaining to the future CTBT organization. It considered in particular the practical yet sensitive issues of the funding, the seat and the possible relation of the organization to IAEA. In those regards, the Working Group recommended revised language for inclusion in the CTBT rolling text.

Moreover, the Friend of the Chair on the Preparatory Commission presented a report on his extensive consultations and study of the relevant experience of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), as well as a draft text on the establishment of a PrepCom, which were considered by the Ad Hoc Committee.

This report on the Ad Hoc Committee's intersessional efforts brings formally to an end my term of office as the Committee Chairman for 1995. As the responsibility for steering the final stage of the momentous negotiating process passes into the capable hands of the representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador Jaap Ramaker, I trust that his demanding task will be rendered more feasible, building on the record of the CTBT negotiations so far.

If that record is considered positive, the credit must to where it certainly belongs: to all delegations for the spirit of cooperation and good will which they consistently have been bringing to the negotiating table, to the dedication of the Ad Hoc Committee's Bureau, the numerous Friends of the Chair and conveners, to the very dedicated work of the IMS experts and their inveterate Chairman, Dr. Peter Marshall of the United Kingdom, to our most competent Secretary, Mrs. Jenifer Mackby, and her colleagues, to the interpreters and all those who have demonstrated that they have a stake in the CTBT, that it is our common urgent goal.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Poland for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. Ambassador Dembinski has just presented to us the results of his last endeavours in the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. This report, together with the substantive report that the Conference presented to the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, constitute a solid foundation on which Ambassador Ramaker can build and conclude the negotiations. I am sure I speak on behalf of all members of the Conference when I express to him our most sincere gratitude for

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his untiring efforts, and his dedication in bringing us nearer to our shared objective. His personal involvement in the negotiations of the draft treaty from their inception, first as Chairman of the Committee's Working Group on Legal and Institutional Issues in 1994, and his contribution to the evolution of the draft treaty last year, will be remembered with great appreciation.

I intend to invite the Conference to adopt the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, as contained in CD/1378, at a subsequent plenary meeting. I am informed that the document will come out in all languages soon.

I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa, Ambassador Selebi.

Mr. SELEBI (South Africa): Permit me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the office of President of the Conference on Disarmament. I would also like to extend the appreciation of my delegation to your predecessor, Ambassador Benjelloun-Touimi of Morocco, for the way in which he guided the work of the Conference during the last part of 1995. We would also like to pay tribute to Ambassadors Dembinski, Norberg and Ramaker for the way in which they led the negotiations on the CTBT in the Ad Hoc Committee during the 1995 session.

My delegation welcomes the decision which was taken by the Conference on Disarmament (CD) on 23 January 1996 to immediately re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban under the chairmanship of Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands. As delegations will recall, the parties to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) set 1996 as the deadline for the conclusion of the CTBT when they adopted the "Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament" at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. This decision was reinformed when the United Nations General Assembly adopted - also by consensus - the resolution on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty (50/65). In that resolution the Conference on Disarmament is called upon "to conclude, as a task of the highest priority, a universal and multilaterally and effectively verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty which contributes to nuclear disarmament and the [non-proliferation] of nuclear weapons in all its aspects, so as to enable its signature by the outset of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly". The completion of the negotiations for a CTBT is therefore clearly the most important task facing the Conference on Disarmament during this session. The CD's decision to establish the Ad Hoc Committee immediately and Ambassador Ramaker's decision to commence that Committee's work right away will send to the international community the proper signal: namely our combined determination to meet the deadline.

It is common cause that whilst the rolling text of the draft treaty remains heavily bracketed, only a few - but fundamental - issues remain to be resolved. Once these issues have been addressed then many of the other difficulties will either disappear or easily fall into place. Of the issues which are still outstanding, that of the scope of the treaty is one of the most essential. Here South Africa has consistently held the view that the CTBT should be an instrument for disarmament and non-proliferation and that

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both these elements must be reflected in the article on scope. We have also made it clear that South Africa does not support the concepts of peaceful nuclear explosions or low-yield tests and we have welcomed the announcements by the Governments of France, the United States, the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation supporting a true-zero-yield test-ban treaty. It was against this background therefore that the South African delegation stated in the general debate of last year's First Committee that we support the draft article which was proposed by Australia on 9 March 1995 in CD/NTB/WP.222. The Australian text, we believe, highlights the important issues which need to be addressed. Our interpretation is that it provides for a fully comprehensive zero-yield test-ban treaty, banning so-called peaceful nuclear-test explosions and also covering preparations for test explosions.

My delegation's support of the 1996 deadline for the conclusion of the CTBT negotiations and our position on the CTBT as an instrument of disarmament and non-proliferation is reinforced by our view that the CTBT is an integral part of a programme of action which will lead to the full implementation of the article VI nuclear disarmament obligations of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty. Paragraph 4 of the Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament identifies the initial elements of such a programme of action for nuclear disarmament. These are the completion of the CTBT negotiations no later than 1996; the immediate commencement and early conclusion of a convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, the so-called "cut-off" convention; and the determined pursuit by the nuclear-weapon States of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons, and by all States of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. The Principles and Objectives also cover other elements which are important to the nuclear disarmament agenda, namely the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the need to address the issue of security assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States party to the NPT. The agreements which were achieved at the NPT Review and Extension Conference provide, however, for a dynamic process which will add to the programme of action as issues are dealt with and removed from the agenda.

On the issue of verification of a CTBT, my delegation believes that the international monitoring system (IMS) needs to be structured in such a way as to provide confidence in its ability to verify the treaty effectively. Like many other delegations we also believe that on-site inspections (OSI) will be rare and that we must therefore ensure that the investigation of ambiguous or suspicious events, at least in the initial phase of investigation, should be swift and effective. Such a system will not only ensure that the doubts and suspicions created by such events are quickly removed but that the international community will be confident of the CTBT's ability to assure compliance with its provisions.

On the matter of States presenting additional information as the basis for their requests for action by a future CTBT organization - information gained from so-called national technical means (NTM) - my delegation shares the concerns which have been expressed by others about possible abuses. We believe, however, that it will be very difficult to prevent States from

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utilizing such information as the basis for their approaches to the future organization and it may therefore be necessary to include measures to regulate its use. Possible steps may be to require that the information should be supplied to the Technical Secretariat in unprocessed form and that the IMS should provide independent confirmation of that information. Utilization of the "red light/green light" mechanism could also place a heavier "burden of proof" on national technical means.

We are, however, convinced that the outstanding issues in the rolling text of the CTBT will not prove insurmountable given the necessary political will and flexibility on the part of all the delegations represented in this chamber.

I would also like briefly to convey our ideas on the programme of work of the Conference this year. My congratulations are extended to Ambassador Hocine Meghlaoui of Algeria on his appointment as Special Coordinator on the review of the future agenda of the Conference as well as on organizational arrangements to deal with the issues of the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; prevention of an arms race in our space; and transparency in armaments.

With the appointment of a Special Coordinator the Conference clearly recognizes that there are many other issues in addition to the CTBT which need to be addressed. Nevertheless, we are all aware that selecting only a few items on our agenda for consideration would be extremely difficult. On the other hand, we will undoubtedly not be able to devote equal time and energy to all items.

It appears to us that there is a large measure of support in the Conference for work on the following issues: nuclear disarmament, fissile material cut-off, transparency in armaments and security assurances. As yet, however, there is no agreement on how we can realistically approach these issues this year. Transparent and open consultations involving members and non-members would give us all an opportunity to give our opinions on how best to proceed towards the substantial discussion of these matters and would enable us to take into account the concerns of all States participating in the CD. We believe that it is possible to make some meaningful advance on these issues without misdirecting resources necessary for the completion of the CTBT negotiations.

My delegation also believes that it would be beneficial to our work if we approached our discussions on the agenda this year without relying on so-called linkages. Ever since they were raised at the end of 1994, linkages have led to a disappointing lack of progress on issues which the Conference should address. Linkages are no doubt a neat way of avoiding progress on certain subjects, or of trying to ensure progress on others, but the result has instead been mostly to block progress on all fronts.

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The reform of the United Nations system is a debate which is receiving widespread attention. Whilst recognizing the independence of the Conference on Disarmament in its role as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, we do not believe that this body can stand divorced from the drive to ensure that the multilateral system becomes streamlined and more efficient. This is especially so given the fact that it is financed by the contributions of all the Members of the United Nations. It is my delegation's belief that the manner in which the CD members have dealt with the expansion issue has highlighted some of the problem areas in the Conference which are in need of reform.

First, the "decision on expansion of membership of the Conference" (CD/1356) which was taken by the CD on 21 September 1995 was a key step in the work which needs to be done to ensure that the Conference on Disarmament reflects the current international environment and not the cold war era as it does now. The international agreements which are negotiated in this body are of universal importance and aspire to universal adherence. This body should therefore be representative of the new international community. As I made clear at the time decision CD/1356 was adopted, South Africa cannot hide its disappointment at the limited scope of the decision; namely that it will require a further decision of the CD before the so-called new members-to-be can take up their membership. Our concerns in this regard have, however, been heightened by the failure of this body to give any substance to its decision, despite the fact that the General Assembly adopted a consensus resolution (50/72 C) calling for the implementation of the expansion decision on an urgent basis and also urging that the new members should together assume membership of the Conference at the start of the 1996 session. Members will recall that the countries which were accepted for membership responded to the CD decision by requesting the President to seek the early agreement of the CD to (i) enhanced participation in the CD's work and decision-making processes through access on an equal basis to all the CD's formal and informal meetings and consultations and (ii) acknowledgment of the opportunity to be considered for CD positions subject to the normal considerations. The Group of 23 countries furthermore also asked that the secretariat should make the necessary seating arrangements in order to reflect the new status accorded to the members of the G.23. There as been no movement on any of these issues.

Secondly, the non-transparent way in which the CD has dealt with this matter identifies further areas which need to be addressed when considering the reform of the Conference. These include the closed Presidential consultations and the closed group process which dominates decision-making. This has the effect that the interests and concerns of the countries which do not have the privileged status of membership are not given the attention and the weight which they deserve. It also allows member countries to adopt positions in closed consultations without needing to explain or defend these positions. In the case of expansion the position of the United States delegation and its concern about one of the members of the Group of 23 is well known. It is, however, also generally known that other members have difficulty even with the implementation of steps which would, in the interim, give meaning to the decision. It is my delegation's view that in the post-cold-war environment it cannot be business as usual. If the CD wants to maintain its status as the sole multilateral global negotiating body on

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disarmament and if it wants universal support for agreements it negotiates, then it must reform. It cannot continue to serve the vested interests of a few countries.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of South Africa for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Japan, Ambassador Kurokochi.

Mrs. KUROKOCHI (Japan): At the outset, Sir, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at the beginning of its 1996 session. It is fortunate for us that we can rely on your able leadership at this most challenging time. We have already benefited from your wisdom, experience and diplomatic skills when you successfully guided us through the smooth start of the deliberations of the Conference and the seamless resumption of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. I can assure you of the fullest cooperation of my delegation. I would also like to express my appreciation to Ambassador Benjelloun-Touimi of Morocco for the exemplary way in which he carried out his important functions as the President of the Conference on Disarmament last year. I also wish to warmly welcome the distinguished Ambassadors of Cuba, Kenya and Nigeria, whose participation will surely enrich our deliberations.

Without exaggeration, the task we face this year in the CD is of vital importance to the whole world. This mission of concluding the negotiations on the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is a lofty responsibility with which the international community entrusts this Conference.

Let me cite a few examples of the international commitment to conclude a CTBT in 1996. It is still fresh in our memory that such a commitment was demonstrated in the "Principles and objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament" decided at the NPT Review and Extension Conference last May and also in the resolution entitled "Comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty" adopted without a vote at the United Nations General Assembly last December.

It is encouraging that we have succeeded in the prompt resumption of the work on the CTBT on the very first day of deliberation of the 1996 CD session. It is a clear manifestation that all of us are, and will continue to be, committed to the earliest possible conclusion of the negotiations on the CTBT.

As for Japan, Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto stated in his policy speech on 22 January this year that Japan would make its utmost effort toward concluding the CTBT in this coming spring.

A world free of nuclear testing is now within our reach. We should not miss this precious window of opportunity. We need to consider how we can make the best use of the remaining time.

For this purpose, we have to, first of all, have a clear vision of a feasible time-frame. Let me draw your attention to the statement I made here on 31 August last year. In that statement I pointed out that the goal of signing the CTBT by the fall of 1996 would make it necessary for us to have a clean text available during the second session of the CD this year. I still

(Mrs. Kurokochi, Japan)

firmly believe that we must complete this task. This means that we need to reach an agreement on the substance of the treaty during this session of the CD.

Secondly, we need to sort out the questions that we need to solve in the negotiations in the CD from those issues that we may entrust to the Preparatory Commission.

Bearing in mind such a timetable, we should grapple with remaining substantial problems in the first session of the CD. If I may refer to my August statement again, I offered my views on three specific areas of particular importance, namely, the scope of the treaty, verification and the organization, in particular, the question of the seat of the CTBTO and the organization's relations with IAEA.

Needless to say, the scope is the central issue of the treaty. The scope will define the CTBT. Japan supports a true-zero-yield CTBT, which prohibits all nuclear-weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions. It is Japan's desire to see the CTBT become a concrete step toward nuclear disarmament. In this regard, we took careful note of the statement made by Mr. John Holum, Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. We welcome his view that, by precluding nuclear explosive tests, the CTBT will have a great practical impact to end development of new advanced weapons and keep new military applications from emerging.

Japan urges all nuclear-weapon States to agree on a true-zero-yield provision as soon as possible. We also strongly hope that increasing support for the treaty language proposed by Australia in its working paper (CD/NTB/WP.222) will soon lead to a consensus as it accurately embodies the true-zero-yield nuclear-test ban. We are now at the stage in which political decisions must be taken with determination toward the convergence of views for the conclusion of the negotiations. No doubt all of us want a "good treaty". It would be a tragedy, however, if, as the result of each State insisting on a treaty which fully incorporates its national concern, we fail to have any treaty at all.

With respect to the verification system, it was regrettable that the inter-sessional work on the international monitoring system this month could not produce sufficient results. Further progress is required in the nearest possible future.

As regards on-site inspection, it does not seem to be a productive approach to continue compartmental discussions on individual items such as trigger mechanism, consultation and clarification, decision-making, time lines and intrusiveness respectively. My delegation shares the view with other delegations that it would be necessary for us to formulate a sort of package that encompasses all related major elements of on-site inspection. To forge such a package, it is important to seek an appropriate consultation mechanism including a Friend of the Chair as suggested by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands.

(Mrs. Kurokochi, Japan)

As to the organization, please allow me to refer once again to what I stated at the CD plenary before. On 6 July last year I made clear Japan's position that the CTBTO should be small, efficient, cost-effective and free of too much bureaucratization. At the same time, I stated that Japan considers Vienna favourably as a possible seat for the organization to make the best use of existing expertise, particularly that of IAEA. Japan now welcomes the emerging consensus which took shape during the inter-sessional period, particularly so because this direction exactly corresponds to Japan's long-expressed view.

In addition to these three points, Japan is of the view that we should proceed with our work looking ahead into the implementation phase of the treaty. I would like to address some issues that will be of significant importance in the future. These items are funding, the Preparatory Commission and entry into force.

First, funding is an especially urgent question. Unlike other multilateral treaties such as the chemical weapons Convention, the CTBT requires a huge financial contribution from each State during its establishment phase. This means that States have to be well prepared to provide the contribution from their budget as early as 1996 or 1997. Thus, we do not have the luxury to wait until the end of the whole negotiations to solve this issue. The sooner we reach a conclusion on funding, the better.

Moreover, this is a very complex question. Finance relates to every aspect of the CTBT organization, including the international monitoring system/International Data Centre, on-site inspection, the Preparatory Commission, administrative costs and the relationship with other organizations. Taking this opportunity, the delegation of Japan would like to express our appreciation for the honour bestowed upon us by appointing a member of my delegation, Mr. Amano, as the Friend of the Chair on such an important and difficult issue. I hereby assure the Conference that my delegation shall spare no effort to fulfil this challenging task.

Second, the Preparatory Commission. We appreciate the Friend of the Chair's effort to make a good start on this issue. We hope that no decision of a political nature will be left to the Preparatory Commission so that it can concentrate its efforts on the technical aspects of establishing the CTBTO and make preparations for the initial phase of the treaty.

Third, Japan also attaches importance to entry into force. The entry into force of the CTBT will definitely enhance the international conviction not to accept nuclear testing. The single numerical measure, the waiver clause and other proposed methods have their own merits and demerits but Japan is of the view that we should adopt a method that enables the day of entry into force to come to us as early as possible. Even though perfect universality seems to be difficult to achieve within a few years, the entry into force of this treaty with a sufficient number of States parties will give a great political impetus to increase the number of States parties to the treaty and will be effective to realize a world free of nuclear testing.

(Mrs. Kurokochi, Japan)

Now, allow me to touch upon some additional, but also significant issues other than the CTBT in the Conference on Disarmament.

I would be remiss if I did not take up the subject of nuclear disarmament. Japan has consistently appealed to the nuclear-weapon States to steadily move forward to nuclear disarmament; we believe it is particularly imperative now in view of the indefinite extension of the NPT and the "Principles and objectives". As for the Conference on Disarmament, I have noted the Presidential remarks made on 23 January on the issue of nuclear disarmament. I hope that the President's efforts to bring about consensus through consultations on this issue are fruitful.

As repeatedly stated, Japan's position on nuclear disarmament is clear. We believe our goal must be the ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons. This should be achieved through a variety of measures to ensure nuclear non-proliferation, to reduce existing nuclear stockpiles and to prevent qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons. Those measures should not be empty slogans but they must be put into action through realistic measures that will lead to actual nuclear disarmament. It was in accordance with this view that Japan again introduced at the United Nations General Assembly last year a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. Japan is gratified that the resolution 50/70 C was adopted at the General Assembly with an overwhelming majority of 154 votes in favour and no opposition.

We are also very pleased to note that the United States shares the same view as Japan in this regard. I am referring in particular to the statement by Mr. John Holum, that I referred to earlier. He stated that "the ultimate goal will be reached only through realistic moves forward, as genuine security concerns permit, with each step building on those before it". Japan fully shares his view that the CTBT is an attainable major step on that path and that we will never achieve a world free of nuclear weapons unless we first achieve a world free of nuclear explosions.

Beyond the CTBT, the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices must be the next such concrete step. I would like to draw delegations' attention to the fact that we agreed to establish an ad hoc committee on fissile cut-off last year. Japan strongly hopes for the earliest commencement of negotiations on this issue.

Finally, as regards the CD expansion, Japan welcomes the CD decision (CD/1356) made last year as one proof that the CD does pay keen attention to this issue. We would like to see the solution to this issue, which is acceptable to all concerned, at an early date.

Last year was a truly pivotal year in disarmament and non-proliferation. It is totally up to our efforts whether we can make this year another historic year. Japan strongly hopes that we, with all other States, will inscribe the year 1996 in history as the year when mankind comprehensively prohibited nuclear testing.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Japan for her statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco, Ambassador Benjelloun-Touimi.

Mr. BENJELLOUN-TOUIMI (Morocco) (translated from French): Mr. President, first of all allow me to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and wish you every success in your task. My delegation and myself reiterate our full readiness to cooperate with you and contribute to success in the Conference's work. I would also like to express our admiration at this stage for the way in which you conducted the consultations to ensure that our work got off to a good start. As the session begins I would also like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General of our Conference, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, and the Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail, who deserve our highest esteem for the efforts they are making to facilitate the work of the Conference. On the same occasion I would like to welcome the Ambassadors of Kenya, Cuba and Nigeria.

Mr. President, I asked for the floor today to announce that on 13 December 1995 the Kingdom of Morocco ratified the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. In thus becoming party to the Convention, the Kingdom of Morocco, which has never possessed or intended to possess chemical weapons, hopes to be able to contribute to the total and definitive elimination of this type of weapon. In view of the basic characteristics of the chemical weapons Convention, in particular its scope and universal vocation, Morocco hopes that the treaty will soon receive the greatest number of ratifications so that it can be implemented as soon as possible. In ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention Morocco would like to recall that it has always supported the total and complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. It considers that the adoption of this Convention is a step towards that objective of fundamental importance for the security of the entire international community.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Morocco for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Hwang.

Mr. HWANG (Republic of Korea): First of all, Mr. President, I would like to extend to you my delegation's warmest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I am confident that your integrity and wise leadership will ensure the Conference a great success.

Let me also express my sincere appreciation for the work of the preceding President, Ambassador Benjelloun-Touimi of Morocco. I am especially grateful for his guidance and devotion towards the expansion of CD membership.

I am taking the floor to express my view on this very question of the CD membership expansion.

(Mr. Hwang, Republic of Korea)

On 21 September 1995, the Conference on Disarmament adopted decision CD/1356 by consensus, whereby the 23 countries listed in the 1993 report by the then Special Coordinator for membership, Ambassador O'Sullivan, will all assume together membership of the Conference at the earliest possible date to be decided by the Conference.

This decision is not only a reflection of the long-cherished aspirations of the G.23 States for full CD membership, but also a landmark in the history of the CD which makes it possible to broaden the basis of support for the results of future disarmament negotiations.

The importance of the CD decision was exemplified by the fact that the fiftieth United Nations General Assembly endorsed CD/1356 by adopting a resolution by consensus which called for the implementation of the decision on an urgent basis.

In spite of the significance and the urgency of the decision on this matter, it has yet to be implemented. This is mainly due to differing opinions on whether or not one State among the 23, which is subject to the Security Council's comprehensive enforcement measures, would have the right to deny consensus on any decision to be adopted by the Conference.

In this connection, my delegation is of the view that it would be helpful to review the basic concept of "consensus" which the CD adopts in its rules of procedure.

The method of consensus has been adopted in the United Nations system since the 1960s when there was a need of adjusting different viewpoints without taking a vote. Therefore, in a consensus system, which clearly differs from the method of unanimity, the majority should have the patience to hear the opinion of the minority. All the participants in the meeting are expected to show themselves to be magnanimous in accepting persuasion, logic, reason, and reconciliation.

In this regard, consensus itself implies negotiation and exists only through negotiation. Once a consensus is reached, however, all the participants in the negotiations should honour the results. They are obliged to do their utmost not to exercise their virtual veto on the consensus decision.

If this understanding of the practice of consensus is applied to the question of CD expansion, the decision made by consensus should, as such, be faithfully implemented.

My delegation sincerely hopes that all the present CD members will not stand in the way of the consensus method along which the CD has chosen to advance and cooperate in creating a general atmosphere conducive to solving the question of CD expansion at the earliest possible date.

In doing so, the CD may concentrate more energy on the much more challenging tasks of disarmament that lie ahead of us.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor?

As I indicated to you at our plenary meeting on Tuesday 23 January, I shall soon start the process of intensive consultations with a view to developing a basis for consensus on how to deal with the issue of nuclear disarmament in the Conference. For this purpose, I plan, initially, to hold a round of bilateral consultations with delegations. Similarly, I intend to start consultations with a view to achieving the earliest possible implementation of the decision taken by the Conference in September 1995 concerning expansion of its membership, contained in document CD/1356. I am sure that, in these endeavours, I can rely on the same spirit of cooperation and accommodation which allowed us to make a smooth and swift start to our work this year.

The secretariat has circulated, at my request, a tentative timetable of meetings for next week. This timetable was prepared in consultation with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban and is, as usual, merely indicative and subject to change if necessary. On this understanding, may I assume that the timetable is acceptable?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held next Thursday, 1 February 1996 at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.723
1 February 1996

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY THIRD PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 1 February 1996, at 10 a.m.

President: U Aye (Myanmar)

GE.96-60376 (E)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 723rd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Allow me at the outset to extend a very warm welcome, on behalf of the Conference, and on my own behalf, to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Her Excellency Lena Hjelm-Wallén, who will be our first speaker for today. Her presence among us today is highly appreciated and is a further reminder of her country's active and abiding interest in the work of this forum, and of the importance attached to the attainment of the objective of the cessation of all nuclear tests. I am sure her statement will be followed with great interest by the Conference.

I also have on my list of speakers for today the representative of Egypt, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, and representatives of the United States of America, France, Australia, Japan, Sri Lanka, Chile and South African.

Once we have listened to the speakers on the list, I intend to invite the Conference to consider the new requests received from Armenia, Yemen and Mauritius for participation in our work as non-members. As usual, these requests have been placed in delegations' pigeon-holes.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Her Excellency Lena Hjelm-Wallén.

Mrs. HJELM-WALLEN (Sweden): Permit me first of all, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at this crucial stage of its work. I wish you every success in your endeavours and pledge the full support of the Swedish delegation. Allow me also to pay my respects to Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and his deputy Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail, and thank them, and their staff, for their professional and dedicated work for the Conference.

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to address the Conference on Disarmament at this particular juncture. For the first time in the history of nuclear weapons, a comprehensive test-ban treaty is now within reach. We must seize this opportunity and make every effort to conclude these negotiations within the next few months.

Over the years, the Conference, and its predecessors, have laid the foundations for our efforts to achieve disarmament and to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This is a heritage which should encourage us to proceed further towards our vision of a world free from weapons of mass destruction. We must never forget that the mandate of the Conference is ultimately based on mankind's legitimate quest for peace and security.

In this forum, treaties of historic importance for mankind have been concluded: in 1968, the non-proliferation Treaty on nuclear weapons; in 1971, the Convention on bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons; and, in

(Mrs. Hjelm-Wallén, Sweden)

1992, the Convention on chemical weapons. We have now had the unique opportunity to add 1966 to this list as the year when the international community decided to ban all nuclear-weapon tests and all other nuclear explosions for ever. This will, indeed, be an historic achievement.

In the weeks and months to come, we must increase our efforts to reach this goal. States which have the capability to carry out nuclear tests or explosions have a great responsibility to refrain from actions which could negatively affect our work. Further tests or other nuclear explosions could seriously undermine what has already been achieved and jeopardize the negotiations. Sweden deeply regrets that China and France have continued nuclear testing during our negotiations, the latest test only last week. We welcome the announcement last Monday by President Chirac that France will now stop all nuclear tests. We urge China to follow this example.

All States must set aside short-term military or domestic political considerations and heed the call of a strong international opinion: No more nuclear tests!

For decades, Sweden has actively contributed to international efforts to achieve a CTBT. Permit me in this connection to pay a special tribute to my late compatriots, Alva Myrdal and Inga Thorson, who worked assiduously for many years, inter alia, in this very hall, towards the goal that we are now about to reach. Sweden has for decades also conducted specific disarmament-related research at its National Defence Research Establishment (FOA) in order to make highly qualified scientific expertise available to multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation negotiations. In 1995, Sweden had the honour to chair the CTBT Working Group on Verification.

We firmly support the conclusion of the CTBT before the end of June. This would allow the United Nations General Assembly to adopt a resolution at its fiftieth session commending the Treaty to the international community. The Treaty could then be opened for signature by the outset of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly.

Sweden calls for a rapid solution to the outstanding issues in the negotiations. It is important that all member States express their unambiguous support for a true-zero-yield test ban. A complete test ban must also include so-called peaceful nuclear explosions, which technically are no different from nuclear-weapon tests.

The verification provisions must be drafted in such a way as to deter non-compliance with the treaty and enable the resolution of any ambiguous events.

Sweden welcomes the offer by Vienna to host the CTBT organization. We note with satisfaction the emerging consensus within the CD in favour of locating the organization in that city. We also believe that close collaboration between the CTBT organization and IAEA would present many advantages.

(Mrs. Hjelm-Wallén, Sweden)

It is of paramount importance to achieve universal adherence to the CTBT. However, provisions for the entry into force of the treaty must not be formulated in such a way that any State might hold the treaty hostage.

As the negotiations now enter the final stage, every participating delegation must be prepared to compromise. If not, the treaty will be put at stake. Delegations must be ready to refrain from there preferred national positions. We cannot always reach the goals that we ourselves consider to be ideal. Instead, solutions have to be sought which are workable and acceptable to all.

Against this background, Sweden has, for its part, decided to join the emerging consensus on certain issues, where we had our own proposals. We have done so in a spirit of compromise in order to contribute to the rapid conclusion of the negotiations.

I urge all participants to act in the same spirit. It is the only way in which we can reach our common goal, a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

In 1965, the then Swedish Foreign Minister, Mr. Torsten Nilsson, addressed the United Nations General Assembly and proposed a package of three main elements. Firstly, steps to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. Secondly, a comprehensive test ban, and thirdly, a halt to the production of fissile material for military purposes. Mr. Nilsson pointed out that the realization of these proposals would have a stabilizing effect and underlined that satisfactory and mutually acceptable methods of verification could be worked out, given a minimum amount of goodwill. As a result of determined international cooperation and constructive and concrete proposals by a number of concerned States, the non-proliferation Treaty was concluded in 1968. However, it took almost three decades until the international political climate changed in favour of the other visions from the 1960s. We now finally stand on the threshold of a new era in which all nuclear tests will be banned for ever. There is also the prospect of starting negotiations on a so-called "cut-off" treaty.

A lesson to be drawn from the past 30 years is that our work for disarmament requires long-term planning, patience and political vision. We have now reached the stage where it is necessary to spell out new objectives for future disarmament and to formulate the concrete steps which can lead us in that direction.

The decision to extent the non-proliferation Treaty indefinitely was based on the understanding that the process of nuclear disarmament would continue towards the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We must not lose sight of this fundamental objective. In this respect, a particular responsibility is placed on the nuclear-weapon States. If these States do not fulfil their obligations in the Treaty, the NPT will be undermined. This was pointed out clearly in the Nobel Lecture some weeks ago by Dr. Joseph Rotblat, the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate:

> "We are told that the possession of nuclear weapons - in some cases even the testing of these weapons - is essential for natural security. But

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this argument can be made by other countries as well. If the militarily most powerful - and least threatened - States need nuclear weapons for their security, how can they deny such security to countries that are truly insecure? The present nuclear policy is a receipt for proliferation."

There are many unwanted phenomena which have been invented and later banned. We have been able to agree to ban chemical and biological weapons. The existence of nuclear weapons is not a sufficient reason to retain them. The political obstacles to nuclear disarmament must be removed, primarily by developing credible verification measures and by strengthening international cooperation, confidence and political will.

We need a clear map to guide us in the process aiming at a nuclear-free world. It is first of all imperative that the important reductions in strategic nuclear arsenals, agreed in START I and II, be fully implemented. START I has entered into force and its implementation is under way. Sweden welcomes the recent decision by the United States Senate to ratify START II. We urge the Russian Federation to take the necessary steps towards ratification as soon as possible, so that START II can enter into force and be implemented without delay. This would also provide a basis for further disarmament negotiations, where all nuclear-weapon States participate and accept the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. These negotiations should include specific time-frames for the ultimate goal as well as for the intermediate steps.

As regards the work of this Conference, the highest priority must now be given to the completion of the CTBT. This is, in our view, the next step towards the ultimate goal. We should not jeopardize this unique opportunity by adding new elements, however desirable we consider them to be.

We must also, as soon as possible, start negotiating a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear devices (the so-called "cut-off"). This would be in line with the objectives unanimously approved by the NPT Review and Extension Conference. And, as the single multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations, the CD would thereby take on another important task.

However, in the view of the Swedish Government, the CD must also explore the possibilities of dealing with the issue of nuclear disarmament. I therefore welcome the fact that you, Mr. President, intend to conduct intensive consultations with a view to developing a basis for consensus on this issue and to report to the Conference at the earliest opportunity. I urge all participants to approach these consultations in good faith and with a constructive spirit. The Conference cannot afford to fail on this issue.

A year ago, the Commission on Global Governance proposed in its report Our Global Neighbourhood that the goal should be to reach an agreement within 10 to 15 years on the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The Swedish Government supports this proposal. Within the framework set out by the

(Mrs. Hjelm-Wallén, Sweden)

decisions taken at the 1995 NPT Conference, Sweden will continue to work together with other countries in taking definite steps towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The Commission on Global Governance is one example of the importance of letting different actors contribute to a more positive political climate. It is my hope that the newly established Canbarra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons will give important new impulses to the work on disarmament. The persistent and patient work which is done both by national and international non-governmental organizations is also of great importance to persuade decision makers to take significant steps in the right direction.

The end of the cold war has given a unique opportunity to eliminate nuclear weapons. But the elimination of these weapons is not primarily a technical matter for experts at international conferences. Basically, it is a matter of values. We need a common set of values, such as tolerance and trust, not only to eliminate nuclear arms but to build sustainable, just and peaceful relations between States and peoples.

When Olof Palme presented the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues to the United Nations General Assembly in 1982 he stated:

> "It is of paramount importance to replace the doctrine of mutual deterrence. Our alternative is common security. There can be no hope of victory in a nuclear war; the two sides would be united in suffering and destruction. They can survive only together. They must achieve security not against the adversary but together with him. International security must rest on a commitment to join survival rather than on a threat of mutual destruction."

The efforts of the Conference on Disarmament are crucial in the process of dismantling the tools and structures of old doctrines on the balance of power and how to achieve security. At the same time, the careful work and long-term perspective of the CD help us to develop a culture and a practice of common security. And in this work, let us first join efforts in bringing the CTBT negotiations to a successful conclusion.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden for her statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I give the floor to the representative of Egypt, Ambassador Zahran.

Mr. ZAHRAN (Egypt) (translated from Arabic): Permit me at the outset, Mr. President, to express the congratulations of the Egyptian delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the CD and on the efficient manner in which you have conducted the work of the Conference, thereby allowing for a smooth start to our 1996 session. I avail myself of this opportunity to pledge to you the full support of the Egyptian delegation. I should also like to convey my delegation's appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Benjelloun-Touimi of Morocco, who guided the work of the Conference admirably throughout the latter part of our 1995 session.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

I take this opportunity to welcome the new colleagues who have recently joined us at the CD, namely Ambassador Rodríguez of Cuba on my right, Ambassador Tolle of Kenya and Ambassador Abuah of Nigeria, and I look forward to working closely with them in the future.

At the beginning of this meeting we heard the important statement by her Excellency Lena Hjelm-Wallén, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden. I wish to congratulate her on her statement and to commend the participation of her country in the efforts to bring about disarmament in general, and in the Conference on Disarmament in particular. Her statement reflects the closeness of the positions of Egypt and Sweden on disarmament questions in general, and on nuclear disarmament in particular. Here I wish to refer specifically to the efforts of Ambassador Lars Norberg of Sweden during his chairmanship of Working Group 1 of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban dealing with the issue of verification, throughout the 1995 session and until January of this year before the current session.

I have asked for the floor today in order to address an issue of the utmost importance to Egypt and to most of the non-nuclear States, namely nuclear disarmament. Before dealing with this issue, permit me to make a few observations about the work of the CD in 1996. The Egyptian delegation is most satisfied at the prompt re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban this year, and we are confident that under the chairmanship of Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands, and with the good will of all CD members, the Committee will be able to conclude the CTBT negotiations at the earliest possible date in 1996. The issue of the CTBT has long been on the international disarmament agenda and the time is ripe to address this subject in a resolute and final manner. In this context, and having been elected Chairman of Working Group 2, dealing with legal and institutional matters, I should like to assure you that I will do my utmost to carry out this responsibility as efficiently as possible. I also look forward to cooperating fully with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Ramaker, and the Chairman of Working Group 1, Ambassador Berdennikov.

Speaking as a representative of Egypt, I should like to make a few observations on some of the most prominent controversial issues in the framework of the CTBT negotiations. With respect to the question of "scope", it is our view that the treaty must ban all nuclear explosions in every environment for all time. To permit low-yield explosions or peaceful nuclear explosions would be tantamount to incorporating a serious loophole in the text of this treaty which would undermine its overall credibility. On that basis, and pending the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, we have welcomed all initiatives involving moratoriums on nuclear testing and most recently President Chirac's announcement of the conclusion of the series of French nuclear tests, which we had hoped would not take place at all. We also hope that, in the future, no State, under any pretext, will conduct further nuclear tests or explosions. We also view the CTBT as a disarmament measure which must put an end to the qualitative and quantitative proliferation of nuclear weapons, whether vertically or horizontally. We therefore welcome the remarks of Mr. John Holum, the Director of the United States Arms Control and

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

Disarmament Agency, who addressed the CD at its meeting of 23 January 1996 saying, and I quote, "The test ban is ... a bulwark against the spread and further evolution of nuclear weapons capabilities".

We have also taken note of the proposals made on 26 January 1996 by the delegation of India with respect to the preamble and the articles on the entry into force and review of the treaty. We feel that these and all other proposals should be carefully studied so as to enable us to reach a convergence of views on issues that remain unresolved.

As regards the "Organization" we are still of the view that IAEA would be best qualified, with a broadening of its responsibilities, to carry out this task. This would allow for significant savings to be achieved and would make available the vast technical experience gained by the Agency over the years. If, however, that proposal were not to meet with consensus, we could agree to the establishment of an independent small organization that would conclude contractual arrangements with IAEA, particularly with respect to verification, so as to make the greatest possible use of the Agency's experience and capabilities in this field. The Executive Council must operate in a just and democratic manner. We do not, therefore, agree to the retention of what are called "permanent seats". At a time when efforts are under way to reform the United Nations Security Council, its composition and its working methods, it would be illogical for us to set up here an Executive Council which would incorporate the same disadvantages that the Members of the United Nations are trying to rectify in the Security Council.

On the question of the seat of the organization, like other States we shall determine our final position in the light of our evaluation of the offer made. As there is at the present stage only one offer to host the organization, there is no possibility of comparison. However, we consider it might be appropriate for the offer of Austria to be in accord with what was agreed after long negotiations with the Swiss authorities regarding the seat of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Although the requirements of the CTBTO are different from those of WTO, the precedent of WTO is the best model to follow.

As for on-site inspection, this is a subject that was comprehensively discussed during the negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention and we believe that the CTBT would usefully benefit from the CWC, the negotiation of which took a great deal of effort and time before consensus was reached.

As far as entry into force of the treaty is concerned, it is our view that a formula should be found to ensure that entry into force takes place only with all nuclear States and all threshold States on board.

While we are well aware of the fact that at this stage it is appropriate to devote all the time available to the CD to the CTBT negotiations, we are also most satisfied by the decision to appoint Ambassador Hocine Meghlaoui of Algeria as Special Coordinator of the Conference on the future of the Conference's agenda. We are confident that Ambassador Meghlaoui's efforts will help the Conference to meet the new challenges ahead of it without neglecting the old challenges which have yet to be resolved.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

Since this statement concentrates on nuclear issues of the highest priority, I do not wish to reiterate our positions concerning the non-nuclear issues on our provisional agenda. Let me only state that we continue to attribute great importance to the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and consider that military action in this environment must be totally prohibited. As for transparency in armaments, it must be dealt with comprehensively in such a way as to cover all kinds of armaments, be they conventional or weapons of mass destruction, so that we can achieve real transparency without selectivity and thus help to develop an early warning mechanism to assist in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. President, I would like to convey to you my gratitude for your having undertaken intensive consultations on the issue of nuclear disarmament and I urge you to continue these consultations until you arrive at a satisfactory result. It is our view that we have been unable to reach a consensus on this issue only because of the continuous opposition of a few members of the Conference who have thus prevented progress in this most important of fields in the present phase of the history of the CD. Now that we have appointed a Special Coordinator to deal with the future of the CD agenda, we hope that this issue will be dealt with in conformity with the trend towards the democratization of international relations, bearing in mind the spirit of consensus.

For several decades now the issue of nuclear disarmament has been on the disarmament agenda. None of us can deny that two nuclear-weapon States, namely the United States of America and the Russian Federation, have indeed made positive bilateral moves in this direction, but there is also no denying that other nuclear-weapon States have yet to commit themselves to any moves at all and that the expectations of the vast majority of the international community have not yet been met. Speeches, action plans, final documents, resolutions and decisions have been issued by the international community, the United Nations and other international forums, including the Non-Aligned Movement, calling for nuclear disarmament. These documents could fill volumes but some nuclear-weapon States continue to regard them with indifference.

It is true that nuclear issues are being dealt with in various forums and most notably the Conference on Disarmament and the General Assembly. Nevertheless issues are never dealt with in a comprehensive and conclusive manner. For example the security assurance given by the five nuclear-weapon States in Security Council resolution 984 to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT fall far short of expectations since these have not been negotiated multilaterally and are not legally binding or comprehensive. The decision that was adopted by the NPT Review and Extension Conference in May 1995 on "Principles and objectives" must therefore be implemented by the CD and serious negotiations must be started on a multilateral and legally binding instrument to provide comprehensive security assurances as soon as possible to non-nuclear-weapon States.

The issue of banning the production of fissile material is another case in point since a ban on the production of such material must not ignore past production and stockpiles, otherwise it would be a half-measure which would only go part of the way towards resolving this problem. The same applies to

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

the comprehensive test-ban treaty being negotiated in this very chamber. While nuclear tests in their traditional forms are to be banned, it seems clear that there are new forms of testing which nuclear or threshold States will continue to develop and improve, particularly those States that have the material and technological resources to be able to do so. These examples illustrate that, despite the overwhelming support of the international community for nuclear disarmament, the progress that is being achieved in the field of real nuclear disarmament is less than satisfactory, and what is even more disquieting is that those that are opposed to nuclear disarmament are the very same States that are endeavouring to de-prioritize this issue, thus raising doubts as to their real commitment to the so-called ultimate objective of nuclear disarmament referred to in article VI of the NPT and the decision on "Principles and objectives" adopted by the NPT Review and Extension Conference.

I do not wish here to enumerate the numerous appeals for nuclear disarmament which have been made by the international community, most recently by the NPT Review and Extension Conference and at the Non-Aligned summit in Cartagena. I do, however, wish to urge the Conference yet again to agree to the immediate establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament to start negotiations on a phased programme with the eventual aim of eliminating all nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. Such a committee could immediately start preparatory work so as to work at full power immediately following the conclusion of our negotiations on a CTBT. Needless to say, my delegation fully endorses the statement made by the Ambassador of Peru on behalf of the Group of 21 on the issue of nuclear disarmament before the plenary meeting of the CD on 23 January 1996.

I shall conclude on a positive note and show that the States that do not possess nuclear weapons are the most committed to the objective of nuclear disarmament and seek a similar commitment from the nuclear Powers. I am pleased to announce that at the beginning of next April Cairo will host the signing ceremony of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty. Reference to this treaty should be inserted in the article entitled "Relation to other international agreements" in the CTBT if it is agreed to include such an article in the treaty. In this connection I wish to express our appreciation to Mr. Sola Ogunbanwo, the United Nations Expert Adviser responsible for negotiations on the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa, whose efforts helped to expedite the conclusion of work on this important and historic treaty.

We view the treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa as a positive and encouraging step which should be followed in the near future by negotiation on the establishment of a similar nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, particularly in view of the enthusiasm for progress towards the attainment of a comprehensive and lasting peace in the region.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Egypt for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I give the floor to the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative

(The President)

Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, Dr. Ola Dahlman, who will present the Group's progress report on its forty-second session, contained in document CD/1372.

Mr. DAHLMAN (Sweden): I am pleased to introduce today the progress report of the last meeting of the Ad Hoc Group. The report is contained in document CD/1372. The session was held from 27 November to 1 December 1995 and experts and representatives from 34 countries attended.

The main topic of the session was to provide a recommendation on an auxiliary network of seismic stations for the envisaged international monitoring system of a nuclear-test-ban treaty. These auxiliary seismic stations would supplement the primary seismic network of 50 stations listed in brackets in the rolling text CD/1364. The design of the primary network was based on the results earlier provided by the Group of seismic experts.

The Ad Hoc Group noted that the principal purposes of the auxiliary stations are to improve the location accuracy of seismic events detected by the primary network and to facilitate the characterization of seismic sources for event identification.

To achieve a cost-effective system the Group tried to utilize to the extent possible, available and planned seismic stations of suitable quality worldwide. To improve event location accuracy the auxiliary stations have to be placed in such a way that they fill gaps in the azimuthal coverage of the primary network for different source regions. It is of prime importance that those stations cover the most active seismic regions of the world, with emphasis on regions where earthquakes look explosion-like. Auxiliary stations should further cover areas where extensive mining activity produces seismic signals detected by the primary network.

Considerable analysis and computational efforts were put into the design of a cost-effective auxiliary network. Most of this work was conducted prior to the group session by its Working Groups on Planning, under the convenorship of Mr. Mykkeltveit of Norway, and on Evaluation, which has Mr. Massinon of France as its convenor. In its design work, the Group made extensive use of the results obtained so far during GSETT-3. Through computer simulations those results, which so far are available for limited geographical areas only, were applied on a global scale to predict the performances of alternative global networks.

The Group agreed on a network of 111 stations to primarily cover the continents. The locations of these stations are shown in figure 1 of CD/1372 and the stations are listed in table 1. As can be seen from the table, it was possible to design a network using existing stations to a large extent. As many as 81 of the proposed 111 continental auxiliary stations are today operational with proper equipment, although communication links might not necessarily be available. Seven more stations are operational but have to be technically upgraded, and thus only 23 new stations are needed.

The Group also agreed on 17 additional stations, listed in table 2 of the progress report, on small islands to provide for improved coverage of ocean

(Mr. Dahlman, Sweden)

areas. The Group made this recommendation with the understanding that these stations should be considered by the IMS Expert Group together with the hydroacoustic component of the IMS. This synergy between seismic and hydroacoustic systems has been considered and reported on in CD/NTB/WP.283.

The Ad Hoc Group recognized that there are many additional stations not included in this recommended network which could make a positive contribution to the location and identification of seismic events. The Group noted that a number of States are prepared to make available data from such national facilities.

The combined primary and auxiliary network should, in the view of the Ad Hoc Group, be capable of locating seismic events of magnitude 4 or higher in continental areas with an uncertainty of no more than 1,000 square kilometres. To locate seismic events with such high accuracy requires careful calibration of the actual network, drawing on events with known locations, such as large chemical explosions or earthquakes, being located with high accuracy, using data from local or regional networks. Such calibrations are needed to eliminate the systematic bias created by heterogeneities within the Earth. Calibration is a time-consuming process that requires systematic analysis of suitable events as they occur, and it results in a gradual improvement of the accuracy of the system. The need for calibration is one reason why the Ad Hoc Group supports the continued testing and evaluation of the global seismic network, to provide for a seamless transition into the future international monitoring system.

On 1 January the Group's large-scale experiment, GSETT III, had been going on for one year. At present, 45 countries are contributing data from, in all, 42 primary and 85 auxiliary stations. With few exceptions, the stations participating in GSETT-3 are stations proposed for the primary and auxiliary IMS networks respectively. Efforts are being made to bring the GSETT-3 primary and auxiliary networks even closer to those being considered for the IMS.

A large number of the stations considered for the IMS network are thus in test operation today and valuable experience is being gained both on the performance of the primary and auxiliary networks as such and on the performance of individual stations. Aside from the crucial issue mentioned earlier - the calibration of individual stations for events in various regions of the world - another challenge is to fine-tune the detection algorithms at the IDC for the individual stations to optimize the detection capability of the system. Work is also under way on procedures to characterize observed seismic events. Other more technical issues relate to reliability, redundancy and information security.

The CSE Working Group on Evaluation is presently evaluating the results and experiences gained from GSETT-3 during 1995, and the Ad Hoc Group plans to report to the Conference on Disarmament on the results following the Group's next meeting in mid-February.

The GSE sessions are important to guide and evaluate GSETT-3 and I express my great appreciation for the excellent support provided by the

(Mr. Dahlman, Sweden)

secretariat during the sessions and in facilitating contacts with delegations between sessions. The bulk of the GSETT-3 work is, however, not carried out at the GSE meetings here in Geneva but through the everyday work at participating stations and at the experimental IDC in Arlington, Virginia, United States.

The GSE work has also been most significantly supported by informal meetings and workshops arranged by individual countries and scientific institutions around the world.

The Ad Hoc Group noted with appreciation the convening of an informal technical workshop on CTBT monitoring and GSETT-3 in Lahti, Finland in October 1995 in connection with the tenth anniversary of the opening of the Finnish array station FINESS. Thirty experts from 11 countries participated and the workshop was an important contribution to the progress of GSETT-3.

The Ad Hoc Group also appreciated the convening of an informal regional GSETT-3 workshop in San Juan, Argentina, in late November 1995. The purpose of the workshop was to inform government representatives and scientists from Central and Latin American countries about the GSETT-3 experiment and to encourage additional countries from that region to participate. Most Central and Latin American countries were represented and an interesting and useful dialogue was established with participating GSE experts. I found the meeting most rewarding and I am confident that it will lead to a considerably increased participation by scientific institutions in Central and Latin America, especially in the evaluation and calibration of the global system. It also aroused considerable interest in the IDC and its training programme, which is attracting an international staff.

The possibility of convening additional such workshops in Africa and South East Asia is being considered. In my view, one of the main remaining tasks for GSE is to increase the knowledge of seismic monitoring and the operation of a global monitoring system among scientists around the world. To have knowledgeable experts available in many countries is a prerequisite to obtaining a credible global verification system. GSETT-3 could, in this perspective, be looked upon as a large global training exercise in which all countries can participate, especially in calibration and evaluation.

Another important remaining task for GSE, in my view, is to maintain and develop the extensive investments made in seismic stations worldwide and in the IDC prior to or during GSETT-3. To deliver those facilities in an operational mode to the Preparatory Commission would be a valuable contribution to the establishment of the IMS in a cost-effective way.

The next GSE session, as already approved by the Conference on Disarmament, will be convened from 12 to 23 February 1996. The main purpose of this meeting is to evaluate the first year of GSETT-3 and prepare an evaluation report to the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Dr. Dahlman for his statement. I should like to draw attention to paragraph 15 of document CD/1372 and remind members that the Conference already approved, on 14 September 1995 at its 718th plenary meeting, the holding of the next session of the Ad Hoc Group which will be convened from 12 to 23 February 1996.

I give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Ledogar.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): First, Mr. President, may I congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair as President of the Conference and assure you of my delegation's full cooperation during your tenure. The rapid re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban was indeed an auspicious beginning to your presidency, a beginning which we all hope augurs well for the equally rapid and successful conclusion of the CTBT negotiations.

As part of the ongoing effort by the United States to discharge its commitments in the field of nuclear disarmament, I wish today to report for the record that, on 26 January, the United States Senate gave its formal consent to ratification, without amendments, of the second strategic arms reduction Treaty, START II. The vote was 87 to 4, an overwhelming vote of confidence.

The distinguished Foreign Minister of Sweden, who honoured us today with her presence, and who enlightened us with her message, was kind enough to welcome this important development in her statement at the opening of this plenary today.

President Clinton, in his statement following the Senate vote, applauded this historic action on START II and said it would "make every American, every Russian, and people all over the world more secure". He noted that "START II requires dramatic cuts in the nuclear arsenals of the two countries. Together with the START I Treaty which was brought into force in December 1994, it will eliminate submarine, bomber and land-based missile launchers that carried more than 14,000 warheads - two thirds of the nuclear arsenals the United States and the former Soviet Union maintained at the height of the cold war. START II will also eliminate the most destabilizing type of nuclear weapon - the multiple-warhead ICBM."

Secretary of State Christopher also welcomed the Senate vote and said that the "United States looks forward to the START II Treaty entering into force as soon as possible". In this regard, the Secretary urged the Russian Duma "promptly to approve START II, and thus ensure that our two countries and the entire world can begin to realize the benefits of its deep reductions". He noted that "START II's deep cuts in Russian and American nuclear arsenals will help make the fear of massive nuclear conflict a thing of the past", and that the "implementation of START II's far-reaching provisions will also help the United States and Russia work together to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction".

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

Mr. President, I plan to submit to you for circulation as official documents of the CD the text of the President's statement on Senate ratification of START II, as well as the text of a White House release entitled "Background information: START II ratification".

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I give the floor to the representative of France, Ambassador Bourgois.

Mrs. BOURGOIS (France) (translated from French): First of all, Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of our Conference at the beginning of a session which we all agree will be a decisive one. Allow me also to thank you on behalf of my delegation for the fruitful efforts you made to ensure that Conference started work immediately without wasting precious time.

On 29 January the President of the French Republic announced the permanent cessation of nuclear testing. At the same time he confirmed that France would spare no effort to achieve the signature this year of a treaty completely and definitively banning nuclear tests. This declaration is in keeping with the one made on 13 June 1995, which was also composed of two parts. First, the completion of a series of tests suspended in 1992. Second, the related decision to sign the CTBT in autumn 1996, if possible.

France has upheld and will uphold its commitments. With regard to nuclear tests, it has exercised utmost restraint and kept to a bare minimum both the number and the duration of the series of tests which were essential to ensure the safety and reliability of a deterrent force which remains a factor for peace in the world and for Europe. It conducted its campaign in a spirit of unprecedented transparency which will soon be further illustrated by the arrival on the test site of international expert missions which will be able, free of all interference, to observe the absence of any harm caused to the environment. The signature of the protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga in the coming weeks will demonstrate the far-reaching nature of this decision as far as we are concerned.

My country is determined to continue the unflagging efforts to arrive as soon as possible at the conclusion of a treaty which will rid the world of nuclear tests. The stakes are historic. The outcome depends on us. Whether we consider the scope of the treaty, its entry into force, the organization which will monitor its implementation or the verification regime, we have now reached the final stage of the negotiations. France will work together with you to help to find common ground. It will continue to take every initiative - in attempts to reconcile positions, analyse the substance and produce compromise wording - which will help us to achieve agreement and make it possible to sign the treaty at the beginning of the fifty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly.

By resuming our work without delay, by taking up our task immediately, thanks to the skill of our President, to whom I pay tribute and thanks to the spirit of compromise shown by all, which I welcome, we have, as we should all realize, done much more than take a procedural decision. We have created

(Mr. Bourgois, France)

expectations within the international community. And here we have generated momentum. The Conference cannot dash these hopes or halt the momentum without destroying the credit it has built up. Each of our countries, each of our peoples, will find grounds for hope if we succeed. A world which has moved closer to nuclear disarmament, the ultimate goal which we seek in the context of general and complete disarmament. A world where the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has been lessened and where a fundamental political commitment made last May has been kept. Let us not allow this opportunity to slip.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of France for her statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador Starr.

Mr. STARR (Australia): Commenting on the cessation of nuclear testing by the French Government, the Secretary-General of the South Pacific Forum spoke for each of the nations of the Forum, including Australia, when he said: "This comes as a great relief to all of us".

It is notable that the programme of tests was reduced and concluded earlier than originally intended. It represents the success of strong opposition in the international community to resumption of nuclear testing. France must act now to fulfil its promise, with the United States and the United Kingdom, to sign and ratify the Protocols to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, thus committing itself in a legally binding way never to test again in the South Pacific. In this regard, I welcome the commitment just given by Ambassador Bourgois and, if I could also divert further from my text, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome warmly the announcement by the distinguished Ambassador of Egypt, Ambassador Zahran, that the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty will be signed in Cairo in April.

It is deeply regrettable that these nuclear-test explosions in the Pacific ever took place. Australia consistently opposed resumption of the tests, as we have opposed any nuclear testing by any State. We will continue to do so. The onus is now on France to work to rebuild the international confidence necessary if further progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is to be achieved.

France must also be conscious of the special obligations it has towards the peoples of the South Pacific by virtue of the location of its test site. In particular, we look to France to close its testing facilities in the Pacific, retaining only those facilities required for environmental monitoring. Australia also urges France to demonstrate its sense of responsibility to the international community by providing access to all relevant data and sites so an independent and comprehensive assessment of all the effects of its testing can be made. Similarly, France must respond to the call of South Pacific nations and accept full and exclusive responsibility for any adverse impacts from French nuclear testing on the Pacific environment and people.

Turning to the crucial task at hand in the Conference on Disarmament, Australia welcomes President Chirac's commitment to work towards a truly

(Mr. Starr, Australia)

comprehensive, that is, zero-yield, CTBT this year. For my part, I look forward to working closely with the distinguished Ambassador of France, Ambassador Bourgois, and her delegation, and other delegations in this room to conclude the CTBT.

Looking beyond the immediate and urgent need to conclude a CTBT, Australia seeks a renewed commitment from France and the other nuclear-weapon States to meet their international obligations under article VI of the NPT for further genuine steps towards complete nuclear disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Australia for his statement. I shall now give the floor to the representative of Japan, Ambassador Kurokochi.

Mrs. KUROKOCHI (Japan): I have asked for the floor today to convey to the Conference on Disarmament the statement made by the official spokesman of my Government, the Chief Cabinet Secretary, on President Chirac's announcement on 29 January to end France's nuclear testing permanently.

The statement reads as follows:

"Since France decided to resume nuclear testing in June last year, the Government of Japan has, at every opportunity, strongly urged France to reconsider that decision and strongly requested it to stop nuclear testing every time it was conducted. The United Nations resolution calling for the immediate cessation of nuclear testing, which was adopted at the United Nations General Assembly last year with the support of many countries, indicates the sincere will of the international community for the cessation of nuclear testing. It is extremely regrettable that France has conducted nuclear tests as many as six times despite repeated appeals from the international community including Japan.

"I sincerely hope that France will redouble its efforts toward an early conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty and for promoting nuclear disarmament leading to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. Japan, on its part, will continue its efforts, aiming at the completion of the negotiations on substantive matters by this spring and the signing of the treaty by autumn."

Taking this opportunity, I would like to reiterate Japan's position that no nuclear test should be conducted by any State.

Now I would like to draw the attention of the Conference on Disarmament to another issue. Let me read the statement made on 28 January by the Press Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the ratification of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II by the United States of America.

"Japan wholeheartedly welcomes the ratification of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II by the Senate of the United States of America on 26 January as a major contribution to advancing nuclear arms reduction.

(Mrs. Kurokochi, Japan)

"Japan hopes that the Russian Federation will follow the United States and ratify START II so that this treaty can come into effect at the earliest possible date."

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Japan for her statement. I would now like to give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka, Ambassador Goonetilleke.

Mr. GOONETILLEKE (Sri Lanka): Mr. President, please allow me to extend to you the warm congratulations and best wishes of the delegation of Sri Lanka upon your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I am confident that with your diplomatic skills and experience and your businesslike approach, you will be able to set in motion the processes needed for completing the responsibilities entrusted to the Conference.

Let me also congratulate through you the CD's immediate past President, Ambassador Benjelloun-Touimi, for his contribution to the Conference and particularly his sincere efforts aimed at resolving the inordinately delayed and vexed issue of expansion of the CD's membership. And let us all hope that the Conference will be able to untie this Gordian knot, at least this year.

Allow me to place on record my delegation's sincere appreciation of the contributions to the Conference of Mr. Vladimir F. Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the CD and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and his able deputy, Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome to Geneva and to the Conference on Disarmament our new colleagues from Cuba, Kenya and Nigeria and wish them a fruitful tour of duty at Geneva.

The year 1996 brings the Conference to the final phase of the comprehensive-nuclear-test-ban-treaty negotiations. The General Assembly in its resolution 50/65 provided some guidelines in this regard. First, it called upon the CD to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban at the commencement of its 1996 session in order to complete the final text of the treaty as soon as possible in 1996. Second, it declared its readiness to resume consideration of the item before its fifty-first session, for endorsing the text of the treaty. It should, therefore, be our earnest endeavour to work harder with the objective of finalizing the treaty text as early as possible to complete this task at least by June to facilitate the reconvening of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly for endorsing the treaty before September 1996. Her Excellency, Chandrika Kumaratunga, the President of Sri Lanka, has instructed my delegation to cooperate fully with the Conference towards realizing this objective.

My delegation is fully aware of the views expressed by some delegations about the time-frame within which to complete the negotiations. Given the fact that some of us had been urging the Conference to complete the work in 1994, mid-1996 cannot be considered too unrealistic a goal to achieve. In the circumstances, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban should endeavour to complete the work by June this year.

(Mr. Goonetilleke, Sri Lanka)

Since the commencement of its current session, what the CD has achieved in respect of the CTBT negotiations is indeed commendable. On the very first day of the CD this year, you, Mr. President, moved its business with great agility, which enabled the immediate re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. Members of the Conference are fully aware of the crucial role you played in developing a consensus towards this unique achievement. This was followed by the holding of the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on NTB the same day, which is no mean feat. The swiftness with which the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee moved in commencing the work on the CTBT is indicative of the strong desire of all members of the Conference to begin its work in earnest. My delegation is convinced that the momentum we have jointly created will facilitate completion of the drafting work on time. Let me congratulate Ambassador Jaap Ramaker upon his assumption of the Chair of the Committee and Ambassadors Berdennikov and Zahran as Chairmen of Working Groups 1 and 2 respectively, and assure them of my delegation's continuous support.

The Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee and the Chairmen of the two Working Groups have an important role to play in the coming months if the Conference is to conclude its drafting work as envisaged. Among the issues that have to be expeditiously sorted out are the scope of the treaty, its verification regime, on-site inspections, the international monitoring system architecture and a host of other crucial issues. Resolution of these issues requires a harmonious blending of hard work and political will on the part of the members and great skill and patience on the part of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee and the Chairmen of the two Working Groups.

Much has been said about the scope of the CTBT. This fundamental issue is yet to be resolved. However, it is gratifying to note the emerging support for a true-zero-yield CTBT. Given the very nature of nuclear-test explosions and the indistinguishability of nuclear tests carried out for weapon and peaceful purposes, there should be a clear understanding that there will be no peaceful nuclear explosions within the framework of the future CTBT. Absence of such an understanding would only have the effect of circumvention of the treaty.

The treaty scope must also determine the status of subcritical tests which are claimed to be undertaken for ensuring the safety and reliability of existing weapons; however, these tests could also serve to further improve the existing nuclear weapons. Having banned nuclear-weapon test explosions and other nuclear explosions, should we permit subcritical tests which would allow the nuclear-weapon States to improve their arsenals and design third-generation nuclear weapons? In this chamber and elsewhere, we have heard statements in regard to the discriminatory nature of the NPT. If our intention is to have a truly universal CTBT, its provisions should apply equally to both nuclear-weapon States and to non-nuclear-weapon States. These are the issues the CD has to grapple with in the coming months, as it braces itself with the debracketing of more than 1,000 pairs of square brackets around the draft text. While we are at it, the Conference must not reject out of hand constructive proposals made by delegations for strengthening the draft treaty and promoting nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Goonetilleke, Sri Lanka)

Several delegations which addressed the Conference so far this year have referred to the nexus between the CTBT and nuclear disarmament. Sri Lanka shares the views expressed by those delegations and supports their demand that the CD should focus its attention on nuclear disarmament as well.

For over three decades the international community has tried to ban nuclear-weapon test explosions. It was the United Kingdom, the United States and the former USSR, three of the five nuclear-weapon States, which initiated work in this direction as far back as 1958. Mutual suspicion, inability to decide on the number of unmanned seismic stations and the number of annual mandatory on-site inspections, reportedly contributed to the failure of that attempt at achieving a nuclear test ban then. However, the international community succeeded in taking limited steps through the partial test-ban Treaty in 1963 and the threshold test-ban Treaty in 1974. Furthermore, the horizontal spread of nuclear weapons was stopped through the NPT, which came into effect in 1970. Despite these concrete measures vertical proliferation reached dizzy heights in the following decades and it will take many more years before the effects of the START treaties become visible. Yet, we are nowhere close to the total elimination of nuclear weapons or safe from nuclear war, while the nuclear-weapon States continue to hold thousands of nuclear weapons and sit on mountains of highly enriched uranium and plutonium. Another disturbing development in this post-cold-war era is the steps taken by the nuclear-weapon States to trade quantity for quality. Such qualitative development of nuclear weapons certainly does not augur well for achieving our final objective, namely the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

It is gratifying to note that there is a common understanding on the part of all of us representing the nuclear haves and the have-nots that our common goal is a world free of nuclear weapons. To begin with, nuclear weapons should have been banned 50 years ago when the destructive potential and the indiscriminate nature of the new weapon were first discovered. Yet, 50 years later we continue to lisp the same mantram as if nuclear weapons could be wished away. Our words have to be matched with concrete steps; if not, another half a century later we shall still be repeating the same mantram without achieving any progress.

The relationship between the cessation of nuclear-test explosions and nuclear disarmament was referred to in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which was adopted by consensus. It clearly states that the "nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament ...". And that was in 1978. Article VI of the NPT, signed more than a quarter of a century ago, referred to the need to take "effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament ...". Regrettably, despite these decisions reached by consensus and binding treaty obligations, no decisive step has been taken by the nuclear-weapon States for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This certainly is not a satisfactory situation. Something has to be done sooner rather than later to remedy it.

It is in this context that my delegation wishes to refer to resolution 50/70 P on nuclear disarmament which the delegation of Myanmar, inspired by the call made by the heads of State and/or Government of

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Non-Aligned countries in Cartagena last year, steered through the General Assembly. Despite its shortcomings as seen by some delegations, the resolution which was adopted amid the 50th anniversary celebration of the United Nations is seen by many as a beacon that would direct us to the twenty-first century, into a world without nuclear weapons or nuclear blackmail. The resolution calls upon the Conference to commence negotiations on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament and for the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework.

My delegation is fully cognizant of the views expressed by some nuclear-weapon States with regard to nuclear disarmament and the role of the Conference, as well as the reference made in the resolution to negotiations within a time-bound framework. Yet, we beg to differ from the views expressed by them, to distance the subject of nuclear disarmament from this Conference. If total elimination of nuclear weapons is our ultimate goal, that journey must begin here in this very chamber. There is no alternative to the CD, which is the sole negotiating forum for disarmament matters, to negotiate matters relating to nuclear disarmament. None of the non-nuclear-weapon States would dare hand over this responsibility, which affects the interests of the entire world, to the five nuclear-weapon States and opt to sit by idly, for the issue affects not only the interests of the five nuclear-weapon States, but also those of all countries. In this regard, allow me to quote from paragraph 28 of the final document of SSOD-I devoted to disarmament: "All the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of disarmament negotiations. Consequently, all States ... have the right to participate in disarmament negotiations. They have the right to participate on an equal footing in those multilateral negotiations which have a direct bearing on their national security. While disarmament is the responsibility of all States, the nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament ...". This position has been reiterated in the declaration of "Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament" adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, wherein the nuclear-weapon States reaffirmed their commitment, as stated in article VI, to pursue in good faith negotiations on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament.

Similarly, we see no basis for the position expressed by some nuclear-weapon States that we should patiently wait until the year 2003 for the achievement of the goals of the START treaties and thereafter allow the subject of nuclear disarmament to be discussed by the five nuclear-weapon States and, depending on the outcome of those discussions, decide whether or not to involve the CD in the negotiations. Again, this position is based on the fallacy that the question of nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons should be the exclusive domain of the nuclear Five.

If we all genuinely subscribe to the final goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons, the time is now for us to take appropriate steps to achieve that objective. Should we fail to act now, another 50 years may go by and we shall still be speaking of our goal without taking concrete measures to achieve it. There is no guarantee that the present propitious political climate will remain unchanged for ever. Future generations will heap the blame on those pundits who thought that the total elimination of nuclear

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weapons could be achieved by proceeding at a snails's pace. This is the rationale of the demand for the commencement of negotiations on nuclear disarmament within a time-bound framework.

Sri Lanka recognizes the need for the Conference to devote a major part of its time this year to conclude the CTBT negotiations in a timely fashion. Yet, it will not be an impossible task for us to begin, even in a small way, our long and arduous trudge for realizing the dream shared by all of us. In the nuclear field, the Conference has a twofold task, namely, nuclear disarmament and prohibition of the production and stockpiling of fissile material for nuclear weapons. Let us decide to commence work on these two items, at least this year.

My delegation is happy to note the adoption, ad referendum though, of the agenda for the 1996 session contained in document CD/1379 of 23 January and the appointment of Ambassador Hocine Meghlaoui of Algeria as Special Coordinator on the future agenda of the CD. I offer my best wishes and assurances of support and close cooperation to him in his endeavours to resolve all outstanding issues on this score.

As I mentioned elsewhere in my statement, the vexed issue of the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament should be resolved early. In my statement of 21 September last year, I expressed the hope that the 23 delegations would be "permitted to assume membership if not immediately, within months, preferably at the beginning of the 1996 session of the Conference". Regrettably, despite the attempts made by the previous President, there has been no discernible improvement in the situation. Sri Lanka is for the immediate and unconditional admission of all 23 delegations as members of the Conference. This has been our consistent principled and stated position. A member means a member, nothing less and nothing more. My delegation will therefore not be a party to admitting of any variations, however slight, insignificant or insubstantial they may be, of the state of being a member. To admit of such compromises would be to dilute the universally recognized and well-settled principle of sovereign equality of States, which is what the Charter of the United Nations proceeds from. Moreover it would establish an unhealthy precedent.

Even as I close my statement, it is my earnest hope that the Conference will speedily conclude its negotiation of the CTBT draft treaty, and commence work on nuclear disarmament and fissile cut-off. Meanwhile, the Special Coordinator could complete his consultations for resolving the outstanding matters concerning the remaining items on the agenda.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Sri Lanka for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I give the floor to the representative of Chile, Ambassador Berguño.

Mr. BERGUÑO (Chile) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, in this first statement in plenary during the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament, I would like to express my keen appreciation to you for the efforts that you have made in order to achieve significant progress in our work, address the major structural questions facing the Conference on

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Disarmament and demonstrate that your well-known diplomatic skill is at the service of the great cause of disarmament. In particular, I would like to express my appreciation for your constant and emphatic references to the need to implement decision CD/1356 in full. In the final part of my statement I will demonstrate how this particular aspect is linked to the central issue of my statement.

The present pace of the negotiations on the convention for the comprehensive prohibition of nuclear tests (CTBT) and our common goal of concluding it this year, as well as a certain number of positions set out at earlier plenaries, make it necessary for me to set forth the reasons for which my country attaches key importance to the success of the present negotiations. The technical development of the arguments is necessarily long and I will submit it in the form of a working paper to the Conference, confining myself on this occasion to the major political principles that underpin our national perspective. These reasons led my country to sponsor General Assembly resolution 50/70 A, which deplores the continuation of nuclear testing, urges its immediate cessation and enshrines the international moratorium as a legal norm which should prevail until the entry into force of the treaty that will put an end to such tests once and for all. In this context, I have pleasure in reading out the statement made by the Government of Chili in response to France's announcement that it had irrevocably ended its testing in the South Pacific.

> "The Chilean Government welcomed with satisfaction the announcement made yesterday by the President of France, Mr. Jacques Chirac, ending nuclear explosions in the South Pacific, thereby concluding this series of tests that were a source of grave concern to the international community over a period of eight months. It also hopes that France's expressed willingness to give renewed impetus to the negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty (CTBT) will definitively encourage other nations to abandon their testing programmes.
>
> "Santiago, 30 January 1996".

I would like to add a personal comment to this happy conclusion of an unfortunate controversy. President Chirac, in his previous capacity as Prime Minister, played an important part in preparing his country for the ban on testing in the atmosphere and he is now going to play an even more decisive role in the elimination of all tests. In the argument that opposed us, apart from our opposition to all types of nuclear testing, our concept of the Pacific basin as an area free from any nuclear threat played an important role. A meeting place of cultures, civilizations, industry and trade of fundamental significance and one in which the French presence has traditionally occupied a position close to our own maritime positions. In order to strengthen this concept of the South Pacific as an area totally free of nuclear weapons, it is essential for the three countries that signed the declaration of 20 October 1995 to confirm at an early date their support for the Treaty of Rarotonga, as they have already done for the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

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As we are referring to historical continuity, we must emphasize that the CTBT must be signed because we have undertaken to do so in the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere in Outer Space and under Water, which a group of countries unsuccessfully tried to amend at the last review conference; because the aspiration contained in the partial test-ban Treaty was reiterated in the preamble to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; and because the 1995 Review and Extension Conference linked the extension of that instrument to the achievement of an ambitious programme of non-proliferation and disarmament, within which the CTBT is the cornerstone of the new structure. Why should we now renounce, vacillate or postpone the discharge of such solemn commitments? At least as regards those of our countries that have unswervingly championed the principles for attaining this objective, when it is actually within our reach, what argument could we invoke to drop our zeal and abandon the promotion of those values that we have extolled for so many years?

Historical continuity, consistency in policies, respect for treaties, is the first major reason for now championing the conclusion of a CTBT. The weight of history is important, but it is much more important to look to the future. The convention that we are advocating is neither the beginning nor the end of a programme, plan and international action to bring about a world totally rid of the nuclear threat. However, it has two essential functions. It puts an end to an era that saw the cruel effects of the use of atomic weapons and the large-scale conduct of experiments that reflected a willingness to accept the use of such weapons conceptually. The well-remembered Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico, in his farewell speech, recalled this chapter of human history, during which strategic thinking shook off the humanistic ideas promoted by Karl Jaspers, Bertrand Russel or Albert Einstein. By leaving this era behind, the convention would create a climate of confidence to take bolder steps in the direction of disarmament. Its second main function is to establish the basis for a programme of action without which the negotiations for international disarmament will inevitably be paralysed, the non-proliferation regime will not be enhanced and the non-nuclear States will not secure the protection and the assurances which are necessary for the flourishing of their sovereign decisions to forge an independent destiny free of the threat of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear devices which nothing and nobody can impose on peoples who, making use of their right to decide their own fate, are following the path set out in article VII of the non-proliferation Treaty.

Why is it necessary for nuclear tests to disappear from the face of the Earth? The simulation of an immoral act, this physical testing which takes the more or less aseptic form of the modelling of scientific parameters, is also a stage of preparation for action. The text submitted by Sweden to the Conference on Disarmament favours a ban also on preparations for a nuclear test, with all the difficulties that are inherent in such an undertaking. But the nuclear test itself is an advanced stage of preparation for an action contrary to international ethics and violates the rights of others. Who can precisely distinguish in these preparations the allegedly legitimate aspect of deterrence from the demonstration effects aimed at others who may be prompted

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to follow the same dangerous path and the provocation effects against those who may rightly feel threatened? The CTBT must be concluded, therefore, because the international community has an imperative need to close this chapter of nuclear testing.

We non-nuclear countries have viewed the non-proliferation Treaty as a symbol of discrimination, basically because it establishes a nuclear élite and because such an arrangement cannot be perpetuated in the international system. Nuclear deterrence can only be understood in the light of the symmetrical existence of a nuclear threat. (This is reflected in the White Paper on French defence, which indicates that deterrence and the use of atomic weapons are totally different.) But we should not interpose the threat of the bomb as the ultima ratio to control a conventional conflict. The conscience of mankind rejects all efforts to extol nuclear weapons as the source of higher responsibilities. Nevertheless it is a virtue of the NPT that it recognizes only five nuclear-weapon States. Just as the international community must strive to cooperate to bring about the gradual disarmament of these five States, so it must keep watch and act decisively to prevent any other from emerging. The indefinite extension of the NPT should not be interpreted as perpetuating an unsatisfactory state of affairs but as a determination to halt any action which would lead to accession by any country to nuclear status. The CTBT is essential in this context. If nuclear explosions are per se unacceptable, a nuclear test by a threshold State that is not recognized as a State carrying nuclear weapons would have the most severe consequences imaginable for the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (the Treaty of Tlatelolco), which contains a provision for suspension of the execution of the treaty in the event of the rise of a new Power possessing nuclear weapons. We have worked patiently to strengthen this instrument and we wish to rule out once and for all this threat to the first treaty (leaving aside the Antarctic Treaty, which applies to a sui generis region) whose achievement was to declare Latin America and the Caribbean nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The CTBT reduces the gap between the rights and obligations of the nuclear and non-nuclear States as long as it results in a total prohibition of all tests in all environments. In this respect, for Chile the "zero option" means an undertaking to refrain from causing or encouraging or allowing explosions to take place in any of these environments. Hydronuclear tests, hydrodynamic experiments and peaceful nuclear explosions belong to this category; the effects of inertial containment and simulation experiments in laboratories are alien to this universe, although they deserve attention because of their possible application in the development of military technologies. It is essential to be clear on this aspect in order to be able to conclude the negotiations decisively.

I would like to refer very specifically to peaceful nuclear explosions, which give rise to a basic difficulty that can only be overcome by means of a total ban. I listened very carefully to the arguments put forward by the delegation of China, which refer to old discussions in this very room, when the Eighteen-Nation Committee was in operation. The difference in the treatment of the subject in article V of the NPT and article 18 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco; the way in which this controversy affected the drafting of the

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IAEA safeguards agreements; and the fact of the coexistence of various legal regimes between nuclear Powers that can carry out peaceful explosions under the NPT, non-nuclear countries that are prevented from doing so by the same treaty, non-nuclear countries that have the right to carry them out pursuant to Tlatelolco but which do not exercise it as long as their exclusively peaceful nature has not been demonstrated technically and countries that are not subject to any rules, is equivalent to international anarchy which only the total, absolute, egalitarian ban under the CTBT can satisfactorily resolve. In the same way, any introduction of quota, thresholds, grace periods or other qualifications in the context of the CTBT would distort it and convert it into just another partial prohibition, an outcome that we cannot and must not contemplate.

It has been said that the prohibition of testing will not prevent the nuclear Powers from keeping their stockpiles and will not prevent the threshold countries, by means which are more difficult but still feasible, from crossing that threshold to become de facto nuclear Powers. This is true, but progress towards third-generation nuclear weapons will be made more difficult and various options will be closed off, as the Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency so eloquently put it. In this connection the CTBT is a nuclear disarmament agreement. In order to effectively reinforce an international regime, this tool for non-proliferation needs to be supplemented by the convention that will prohibit the production of fissile material for military purposes and the constant strengthening of the international safeguards regime.

Allow me to conclude with one or two general political comments. A universally accepted CTBT will be the indispensable bridge between the NPT and all the regional treaties that are irresistibly broadening the spread of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Its political bodies, which should be genuinely representative, and its international monitoring system, which will gather together scientists from developed and developing countries in a fruitful community of ideals, should be located at the same site. For well-known reasons, Chile has already expressed its support for Vienna as the headquarters of the entire CTBT system; but if a "cut-off" convention is adopted, requiring an indispensable input from IAEA, there is all the more reason for choosing Vienna.

Along with the decision to accelerate the work of the Committee adopted by Ambassador Ramaker and the excellent contribution made by the Friend of the Chair on the subject of the Preparatory Commission, a broader political decision is necessary on the organizational aspects, which will also have an impact on the work of the scientific experts.

One last word on participation: careful study of the rules of procedure has persuaded me that, without any change in its rules, the Conference has all the power it needs to offer all the Member States of the United Nations the broadest and most egalitarian participation possible, thereby contributing to the universality of the effort to complete one of the most important treaties in the history of international disarmament. The representative of Sri Lanka's timely reference to paragraph 28 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, a paragraph and document that

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constitute the direct predecessors of the current rules of procedure of the CD, is part of the reply to the questions of participation, expansion and universality which are such a cause of concern for us and which you, yourself Mr. President, as well as your predecessor, Ambassador Benjelloun-Touimi, have put so much effort into resolving.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Chile for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I shall now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Mr. GOOSEN (South Africa): The issues which I briefly wish to address are the President of France's announcement on the cessation of nuclear tests, and the decision of the United States Senate on the ratification of the START II treaty.

The South African Government is pleased at the announcement by President Chirac on 29 January 1996 that France has ceased nuclear-weapons tests, and that the protocols to the Rarotonga treaty, which establishes a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific, will be signed by France shortly.

South Africa has consistently condemned the six French tests and the two Chinese tests in the last nine months, and remains firmly opposed to the testing of nuclear weapons, as a matter of principle. The South African Government is convinced that the cessation of all nuclear testing will enhance the climate for negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty within the 1996 deadline which has been set by the international community. The early and successful conclusion of a CTBT is the most important priority for the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva this year.

The conclusion of a CTBT in 1996 forms an integral part of the agreement on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament which was adopted by consensus at the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference during May last year. This deadline was subsequently confirmed by the entire international community when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the consensus resolution on the CTBT calling for the conclusion of the Conference on Disarmament negotiations so as to enable the treaty to be signed at the outset of this year's General Assembly session. South Africa furthermore regards the CTBT as integral to the achievement of the continued and common goal of increased international peace and security.

Before concluding, my delegation would also like to extend our congratulations to the United States on the United States Senate's decision to approve the ratification of the START II treaty. We urge the Russian Federation to also take the necessary steps for ratification of this treaty in order that it can enter into force at the earliest possible time.

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The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of South Africa for his statement. That concludes the list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? France has asked for the floor. You have the floor, Ambassador.

Mrs. BOURGOIS (France) (Translated from French): I regret to have to take the floor again at a time when France is not alone in considering that not a minute must be lost to conclude a treaty that will completely and definitively ban nuclear testing, which my country was the first to propose in August 1995 should be based on the zero option. In response to some delegations which have chosen to address what is now in the past, and whose feelings I understand, I will quote the very terms which were used by the President of the French Republic:

> "I know that the decision which I took last June may, in France and elsewhere, have given rise to feelings of concern and emotion. While my resolve was not affected, I was not indifferent to these tides of opinion. They bear witness to the growing attachment of the inhabitants of the Earth to collective security and protection of the environment. These are concerns that I share."

I must also - and I regret this with regard to a delegation with which cooperation in the negotiations, as far as I know, is close and fruitful - take up some words which express distrust and doubt vis-à-vis my country which our commitments show to be absolutely unjustified. France, which has a presence in the South Pacific, is perfectly aware of its responsibilities and shoulders them. By announcing at the highest level the signature of the Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga, France responded in advance to the concerns expressed by that delegation, just as I thought I had replied in advance to another type of concern with my announcement of the forthcoming arrival of various independent expert missions at the Mururoa test site. I would hope that the work that we are urgently called on to tackle now will not be further delayed by considerations which have nothing to do with the negotiations themselves, and which today have no foundation.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of France for her statement. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? It does not seem to be the case, so we shall proceed further.

I should now like to take up the new requests for participation in the work of the Conference during this year. Requests were received from Armenia, Yemen and Mauritius. They are before you under a covering note by the President in document CD/WP.471. May I take it that the Conference decides to invite Armenia, Yemen and Mauritius to participate, as non-members, in the work of the Conference without having to convene an information meeting for this purpose, on the understanding that this would not constitute a precedent for future similar requests?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: As you are aware, I am continuing my consultations with a view to developing a basis for consensus on how to deal with nuclear disarmament. Similarly, I am pursuing my efforts aimed at the implementation of the decision on expansion of membership (CD/1356) at the earliest possible date. I shall keep you informed on any progress achieved on these issues.

The secretariat has circulated, at my request, a tentative timetable of meetings for next week. This timetable was prepared in consultation with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban and is, as usual, merely indicative and subject to change if necessary. On this understanding, may I assume that the timetable is acceptable?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 8 February 1996 at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.